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Stanley Plastrik

Marching on Montgomery

The twenty-five thousand Americans who converged upon Montgomery on March 25th surely did not represent the "best" of America in terms of wealth, status or power, but—in the words of Bayard Rustin—"all the best in America" was there. No one who went through that exhilarating day will ever forget it. It was the most powerful, confident, and dramatic civil rights confrontation ever held in America. If the March on Washington may be likened to a declaration of purpose on the part of the American Negro, the March on Montgomery was his declaration that henceforth he will walk without fear. That this confrontation took place in the heart of the unreconstructed South only underscored its drama.

Coming from New York in a hastily arranged flight, one first became aware of the approaching tension upon reaching the comparatively moderate city of Atlanta. There, waiting for the Montgomery plane connection, one encountered the first curious and hostile stares; more importantly, there were the people who, like oneself, were Montgomery bound. It was the most natural thing to approach them, introduce oneself, and exchange notes. Some were veterans of the movement (SNCC, Catholic Inter-Racial Youth Council, etc.); others, like myself, were veterans of past movements and peripheral participants in this one; still others (most of the nuns and sisters) were experiencing the excitement of their first "witnessing" and mass action.

The passengers on the Montgomery-bound plane broke up into two groups —the "invaders" (how many times were we to hear that word) and the white Southerners, hostile, confused, angry. At the airport chartered busses were ready and rolling, to carry the new arrivals to the City of St. Jude, the previous night's camping site, from which the March would be completed. In a few moments we were rolling along the now famous Route 80 toward the complex of red brick buildings making up St. Jude.

The March was already underway. The highway leading into the city was packed with an orderly, impressive, moving crowd. Before long we were entering the southern outskirts of the city, walking through an all-Negro section of the city.

As we swung onto the broad street that leads downtown through the center of Montgomery and then upward to the capitol building itself, the first heckling from white bystanders began. But by now the March was so massive, its tone and spirit so high, that this heckling meant nothing. It was met

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with smiles of contempt. Few whites lined the main street; most were behind the windows of the somewhat seedy office buildings and stores that lined the street. Stationed along the line of march were hundreds of the federalized Alabama state guard, a hostile, sloppy group of soldiers, many smoking, drinking coke and shuffling around. (Many of these protectors had sewn small confederate flags onto their uniforms.) The noisiest expression of hatred came from the office buildings in which insurance companies, auto sales stores, etc., were located—white-collar sales people, insurance salesmen, clerks.

The main street dips down toward the center of Montgomery at a slight slope, flattens out, then rises toward the state capitol on a similar slope where, around a bend, stands the capitol building itself. This was the road on which Jefferson Davis, one hundred years ago, walked to be sworn in as president of the Confederacy. The most impressive view of the afternoon was at the bottom of this dip—ahead were ten or more thousand people, marching six abreast and singing freedom songs; behind an equal number of people stretching to the very outskirts of the town.

Who will ever forget his first view of the Alabama capitol building, flying the state flag and underneath a huge flag of the Confederacy? Only the marchers carried the American flag. As the marchers gathered closer together to form one solid, disciplined, and orderly meeting, the only onlookers were knots of soldiers and state employees staring out of the buildings. Governor Wallace handled himself in a confused manner throughout the day, now agreeing to see a delegation, then rejecting a meeting. The point is that the power of this demonstration came as a surprise to him and his fellows in the state legislature.

There is no need to repeat here the speeches of the meeting. Martin Luther King, in my view, is easily the most powerful and impressive public speaker in America today. Not only does he find the tone, rhythm and words of the popular orator; he also understands the need to raise the level of his audience. His speech contained a concise and clear summary of the best American historical thought on the cause and role of supremacist doctrine in social and economic terms. Finally the emotional peak of the long afternoon came after King's peroration when 25,000 people, swayed back and forth singing "We Shall Overcome"; to find oneself linked on either side with two pretty, young Negro high school girls who shyly looked out of the corners of their eyes, was worth the long hours of standing in the sun.

•

Later, as evening came, I found myself at an integrated hotel in downtown Montgomery; but this was risky business. Gangs of young white toughs were already out on the streets looking for "strays." The restaurant waiter was openly aggressive, the groups of older whites in the lobby were abusing the newspaper and TV men staying in the the hotel. My decision to leave abruptly was reinforced upon reading a bronze placard at the hotel's entrance announcing that upon this sacred spot Jeff Davis had been first proclaimed as head of the Confederacy.

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Do not underestimate the significance of the Montgomery March. It dealt a smashing blow to the worst illusion of the hard-core South: that it can live along on myths of the past, that it can escape the harsh scrutiny of the rest of America. We marched, white and black, Northerners and Southerners, into the very bastion of racism; we came by the thousands, and stand ready to come again. The South will never again be the same.

What Is New About Selma?

The murder of a human being is never to be dismissed, especially of one like the Rev. Reeb. Yet that is not new, and probably it will happen again, many times, before the Negro liberation movement gains its complete victory. The wanton brutality of sheriffs gives more than enough cause for the revulsion it has created. Yet that too is not new, and probably will happen again. What *is* new and overwhelming is that the movement has penetrated to the heart of the Black Belt, the core of racist mania. There Negro resistance has quickly shown itself to be a *mass movement,* embracing thousands of people without any previous experience in politics or protest. As if to mock the legend of ingrained passivity and with one gesture whip off the mask of accepted inferiority, the Negroes of the Black Belt have proven themselves adept at the art of demonstrating: it seems to come naturally. The movement has deepened its roots, strengthened its support, caught up in its passion the most exploited and humiliated of American Negroes. That is a great event.

And it confirms, in our judgment, the soundness of the policies it has adopted—policies that anticipate a division of labor between, say, SCLC and SNCC and allow for differences over tactics among the participating groups. Loosely structured though it may be, the Negro movement does have a unique character: it comes from the experience of the participants themselves. In its variations upon passive resistance; in the moral and tactical gains it has won from strict non-violence; in its brilliant use of the clergy as leaders and spokesmen; in its tolerance of a range of inner tendencies—in such ways, the movement has shown great resourcefulness. Noise has come from certain "advisors," marxoid ideologues and nationalist adventurers who use the word "militancy" as if it were a magic wand or who indulge themselves in irresponsible chatter about violence; but once again it is clear that whatever mistakes he may make (and he has a right to them, he has earned that right!) Dr. King expresses the democratic aspirations of his people, shows courage in battle, and shrewdness in tactics. For through the Selma struggle, the movement has again ignited the moral feelings of the

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country and virtually forced the federal government to press for a new voting bill.

President Johnson's speech on March 16 was a remarkable performance. Whoever may have written it, Dr. King and his colleagues were right there behind the writer, prodding his elbow. No president in recent history —certainly (let liberals note) not John F. Kennedy—has so completely accepted in public the goals, the very language, of the Negro movement; which seems to us far more consequential than the fact that Johnson's ghostwriters are less suave than Kennedy's were. Whether the President is "sincere" matters little; the point is to act as if he is, for his public stand will have enormous consequences.

As always, the extent to which a voting law is enforced will depend on the unrelenting pressures applied by the movement and its allies. (Speaking of allies: it was good to see union leaders like Walter Reuther and Charles Zimmerman join the Selma protest.) But the President's speech and his proposals show how much has already been achieved through democratic pressure; and they lay the groundwork for still further mass activity and participation.

Sheriff Clark wore a button saying "Never." The Negro people of Selma are insisting that "Never" means "Now."

I. H.

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A QUARTERLY OF SOCIALIST OPINION

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COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

Irving Howe

Vietnam: The Costs and Lessons of Defeat

March 20, 1965

These remarks, unavoidably, are being written about a month before they will be read. In the interim, changes are likely to occur in the Vietnam crisis. But the fundamental facts, precipitated by years of political reaction and obtuseness, are not likely to change.

The truth is that the situation in South Vietnam is just about hopeless; that negotiations, if they are even possible, must be undertaken not in the delusion that they can magically transform the unhappy reality but that they will register it realistically; and that if the United States proceeds further to escalate the war, the probable result will be to compound defeat with disaster.

Talk about negotiations is in the air. Both Hanoi and Moscow have, by now, declared themselves in favor of the French proposal to reconvene the Geneva Conference. At this moment, Washington seems determined to avoid immediate negotiations and to strengthen its hand for future negotiations by selective bombing in North Vietnam. Whatever happens between the moment this is being written and the time it will be read, we believe the following points—constituting not an analysis but a summary of position—will continue to be relevant:

1) *South Vietnam, as an independent political entity or a coherent society, is on the verge of dissolution.*

Far more important than the military defeats, though obviously connected with them, is the fact that the process of internal social decay is very far advanced in South Vietnam. The mass of the peasantry—war-weary, suspicious, long-suffering—shows no attachment to the Saigon regime, nor is there any reason why it should. The sons of the peasants, driven into the army, lack the will to fight; they desert at the first opportunity. The cities are sullen, demoralized and politically dormant. There remain no significant social forces which make their views felt, except the militant wing of the Buddhists who offer neither a constructive nor even a clear program, but strike an increasingly anti-American note. The total effect of their political activity is to speed the descent into chaos, with some of them seemingly expecting that in consequence they will take power and arrange a deal with the Vietcong.

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The *Wall Street Journal,* not usually charged with being "soft" on Communism, understands all this very well: "It is doubtful," says its editorial of February 24, 1965, "that Europe could have been reclaimed from the Nazis if the peoples had any sympathy for Hitler or were uninterested in his removal. It looks increasingly doubtful that we can maintain a position, much less win a war, in South Vietnam against the opposition of apathy in the 'ally.' "

This is the heart of the matter. There no longer seems to be (if ever there was) a coherent South Vietnamese nation with a wish for self-preservation; there is no political or moral leadership able to inspire or rally the people; there are only cliques maneuvering in Saigon, like vultures circling over the bleeding body of Vietnam.

2) *This debacle is the result, not primarily of Vietcong military power, but of more than a decade of wasted possibilities and reactionary politics on the part of both the United States and its Vietnamese allies and agents.*

One becomes almost impatient with repeating this and hearing it repeated: which does not make it any the less true or urgent. A government in South Vietnam which through the 1950's had *expropriated* the landlords and given the peasants the land with credits for development; a government which in the cities had encouraged political freedom so as to begin the creation of a coherent democratic polity—such a regime would have had a *chance* to survive. Perhaps no more than a chance. For it must be remembered that Indo-China was the only country in the world where, from the beginning, the movement for national liberation was led and largely controlled by the Communists; and this, obviously, gave Ho Chi Minh an enormous advantage. To say that the present debacle leads right back to the cupidity and brutality of French imperialism helps not at all in the immediate dilemma, but is a fundamental point for understanding the larger curve of recent Indo-Chinese history. What needs to be added is that the United States, through its prolonged support of the Diem dictatorship, the failures of which induced hostility and lethargy among the peasants, disillusionment in the cities, a splintering factionalism which came to the surface with the fall of Diem and has never since been healed—the United States thereby bears a heavy responsibility for the present debacle.

Still, directly after the partition of Vietnam in 1954, there was perhaps a chance for establishing a viable economy and a coherent society in South Vietnam. The land is rich and fertile; the country, given peace and a modicum of reasonable efficiency, could be self-sufficient. Authentic nationalists, both anti-Communist and anti-imperialist, had begun to appear. A million North Vietnamese chose to leave their homes and move South, because they did not wish to live under a Communist dictatorship. Economic aid from the West could slowly have helped win the adhesion of the people. (It has been pointed out that even if the U.S. had chosen to underwrite compensation of the South Vietnamese landlords as a way of painlessly getting the land to the peasants, the cost would have been quite modest by comparison to military expenditures. Instead, a brutal and senseless policy of peasant

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uprooting, in the name of the strategic hamlet program, was underwritten by the U.S., thereby further alienating the peasants.)

What actually happened is well-known—though the full details need very much to be told. Was disaster inevitable? We think not. We reject the authoritarian assumption that there is something inherent in the character structure or the historical traditions of "underdeveloped" peoples which makes it impossible for them to sustain a democratic society. India, for all its faults and failures, indicates the contrary. And we reject the defeatist mystique which regards Communist victories as inevitable in all but the prosperous and industrialized nations —though we recognize that if the present political trends continue, there will be new and even more explosive Vietnams tomorrow. No; the disaster in Vietnam was due to the narrowness and class selfishness of the local leadership supported by the U.S.; it was due to the failure of the U.S. government to understand or its refusal to accede to the social upheavals in the "underdeveloped" countries. In the grip of sterile myths about "free enterprise," Asian "psychology," "strong" anti-Communism and the like, our policy helped prepare the ground for Communist victory. And we shall all pay for it, perhaps in blood.

3) *Short of negotiations, which are bound to be painful and costly, there is no way out of the Vietnamese debacle.*

The policy of war by proxy has reached a dead-end because of the unwillingness of the South Vietnamese soldiers to fight and the incapacity of their officers to lead. Further to try to continue this policy means simply to waste life, money and time. It will lead, almost certainly, to greater demoralization among the South Vietnamese, still more tragi-comic coups among ignorant and inept generals, and the possibility of American "advisors" being expelled by a South Vietnamese regime which would decide that its only recourse is to make a deal with the Communists.

To escalate the war is sheer madness. The bombings of North Vietnam are of no significant military value; they will drive the people of Vietnam into the arms of the Communists; and they probably do not help to further (as some apologists have argued) negotiations with Hanoi. For as long as these bombings are merely token and sporadic, they have at most a nuisance value: they do not seriously change the balance of power in Vietnam, now overwhelmingly favorable to the Communists. If, however, the bombings really endanger the industrial and power centers of North Vietnam, they risk the retaliation of a march south by Ho's army—and that would mean, in a few weeks, total Communist control of the country.

Military estimates indicate that if the U.S. were to undertake the "pacification" of South Vietnam through its own troops, and even if this did not provoke, as it probably would, large-scale intervention by the North Vietnamese or Chinese "volunteers," the number of U.S. troops required would run into the hundreds of thousands, anywhere from 200,000 to half a million. Such an intervention would surely cement still further the ties between the Vietcong and the popula-

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tion, since guerrilla resistance could then be justified all the more in the name of anti-imperialism. And even if such an intervention were successful, what would then be the political consequences in a country devastated, a country charged with sullen hostility to its "liberator"?

As for the prospect of a large-scale war, which some American generals and certain ferocious columnists of advancing years now believe to be necessary, there is no need to argue that in our columns. It would be a disaster for humanity; it would have reactionary consequences at home and abroad; it would hopelessly embroil this country in Asia. It is simply not to be thought of . . . though various maniacs and fanatic ideologists are doing just that.

4) *Negotiations, while necessary, are not a way of achieving happy results for either the Vietnamese people or the United States; they are a way of ending a national blood-letting for the Vietnamese.*

We favor negotiations, but have no illusions as to their probable consequences or meaning. What they will reflect is the present relationship of power; and they will lead to a more or less stabilized version of that relationship.

We favor negotiations, but are distressed by some of the arguments advanced by those who have been publicly agitating for such a course. There is no political magic inherent in "neutralization"; it is, at best, a formula for ending a hopeless struggle and accepting a new relationship of power in South Vietnam—a relationship which, for anti-Communist democrats both there and here, is likely to prove depressing. To read, in a statement initiated by A. J. Muste and his friends, that "many problems will remain, but withdrawal of U.S. troops will provide the only chance that the people of South Vietnam can become masters of their own destiny"—this strikes us as grotesque. Unless, of course, someone proposes to put forth the weary old nonsense about the Vietcong being mere nationalists (or perhaps "agrarian reformers"), instead of the Communist-dominated movement that it is.

What can be hoped for from negotiations? At best, the establishment of some sort of "transitional" regime in Saigon, in which the Vietcong would necessarily, by direct or indirect means, be strongly represented. This would entail an orderly withdrawal of American troops; it would make it possible to save, through emigration, the several thousand authentic and uncompromising anti-Communists, some nationalists and others in or near the nascent Vietnamese labor movement, who remain in South Vietnam; it would lessen (though not eliminate) the danger of a blood-letting by a victorious Vietcong; and it would end the agonizing and hopeless struggle.

In the course of such negotiations, the United States would not be in a position to enforce through diplomacy what it has not been able to enforce through arms: namely, its demand that North Vietnam cease intervening in the South. But it would be in a position to offer certain economic concessions to both North and South Vietnam, as a way of enforcing even the limited conditions that have been sketched above, and also in the hope that the historic antipathy of the Viet-

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namese toward China (long an imperialist power in this part of the world) would reassert itself in the direction of a "Titoist" independence. Here, with some adroit diplomacy and political flexibility, there may be some arrangements that could be negotiated with the Russians.

Nothing in this perspective should lead anyone but an open or covert supporter of the Communist powers to feel sanguine. For the people of Vietnam, the choice now seems to be between varieties of disaster; a negotiated arrangement may bring them peace but it will certainly not allow them to become "masters of their own destiny." For the United States negotiations and withdrawal from Vietnam under the conditions likely to follow from negotiations, could mean a significant defeat in the present world struggle. For Southeast Asia the danger of further Communist penetration would be very real (it already *is* very real); but we do not believe in the fatalism of the "dominoes" theory that the loss of one country in an area necessarily leads to the loss of the others. In no other country of Southeast Asia does the indigenous Communist movement have anything like the power it has had in Vietnam; and there remains the possibility—even if it is little more than a possibility—that both in the United States and Asia something will be learned from the Vietnamese fiasco which will be applicable in time elsewhere.

It is a grim prospect, but we see no other choice.

Comment by Michael Walzer

There is one major difficulty with Irving Howe's statement. He fails to grasp the significance of the most important point he makes: that in Vietnam the national liberation movement was *from the beginning* led by the Communists. There, in a sense, is the whole story. The U.S. failed to establish a democratic regime in the South not because of reactionary stupidity (perhaps it is time we granted the intelligence of the men in Washington and began to argue about their purposes), but because the Communists were the only political group capable of winning an election. The commitment to "hold" South Vietnam entailed support for dictatorial and militarist governments.

Of course, it is possible to imagine a reformist dictatorship, a social democratic vanguard operating in the shadow of American military power while gradually winning local support. But the cadres for such a vanguard probably did not exist in Vietnam and in any case its activities would have been utterly compromised by its reliance on foreign support. No, the foundations of the American presence were the old upper classes and the political right. I doubt that this was a choice; they were the only foundations. That is by no means true everywhere in the

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world. It was true in Vietnam *from the beginning*—and that simple fact ought to call into question all the American rationalizations for intervention.

There seem to me to be two possible reasons which might lead American radicals to give support or qualified support to U.S. military intervention in a country like South Vietnam. First, if the intervention seems to be necessary to maintain that rough balance of power upon which international order, such as it is, depends. Secondly, if the intervention is on behalf of a regime or movement which has major local and popular support. (I'm not sure that the second of these is a sufficient condition by itself, but that is another argument.) These two reasons would have justified American intervention on behalf of the Loyalists in the Spanish civil war; and I believe they justified intervention in Korea.

But neither reason makes any sense whatsoever in Vietnam. The strategic arguments put forward by Pentagon officials (most clearly stated by Hanson Baldwin in the *Times* Sunday Magazine, February 22, 1965) are literally insane, a bizarre patchwork of the 19th-century geopolitics and 20th-century hysteria. And the arguments about South Vietnamese independence are cruel and deceitful. Vietnam has not been independent in any meaningful sense since 1954; at the moment it is not a nation and has no government. And this after eleven years of patient puppetry by the not-so-stupid men in Washington!

In a word: we should never have been there; we must now get out. Granted that our absence would not have resulted in a "happy" political solution in Vietnam; nor will our withdrawal do so now. But the pursuit of happiness has not for some time been the end of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia.

John McDermott

Does the Goldwater Movement Have a Future?

Seymour Lipset has argued, in *Encounter,* that the Goldwater movement has significance chiefly as the last desperate gasp of a dying social grouping, the final effort of traditional, Protestant, small town, inner-directed America before it succumbs to the assaults of the 20th Century. A good deal of evidence supports this view. Polls have shown, for example, that Goldwater's positions on the American-Soviet *detente,* on the Civil Rights Act and on the welfare role of the Federal government represent a declining as well as a minority viewpoint. The election returns seemed

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overwhelmingly to confirm this. I hope Lipset is right, but I fear he is not.

The Lipset thesis fails to account for the large numbers of non-WASP, non-rural, anti-traditionalist, college trained and highly skilled young persons who have responded to Goldwater. Though they do not constitute more than a significant minority within the movement, their presence suggests that Goldwaterism derives its major impetus and significance from a political revolt of a segment of the new middle class.

The term "new middle class" refers here to those first-generation-college and-business-course graduates, technicians, and sub-technicians who were propelled out of blue collar America partly by the demands of World War II but primarily by the technical needs of postwar American industry. These people accepted the alien disciplines of school, college and institute training, along with the deferment of adult life, because they were armed with expectations regarding personal independence, jobs where individual merit would be decisive, and participation in the political life of the country. In short, they expected to enter the old and celebrated middle class. What has happened instead is that their expectations have been systematically denied by the going structure of American life—viz., mega-organization, rationalization, bureaucratization, and the substitution of institutional relations for political processes.

These children of the New Deal, or if you will, these white collar proletarians, have been asked to accept inadequate rewards for their educational sacrifices. An abundance of consumption opportunities and a high but impotent social status are insufficient. Having aspired to become citizens, they find themselves merely consumers, tax-payers, and employees. Thus the Goldwater movement is not merely a status revolt, nor the panic of a dying class, but a genuine quest for the power to remake a society which these people feel has betrayed them.

One can see this in Goldwater's rhetoric. To a group which was led to expect a society so different from contemporary America, an interpretation of society which locates an inincreasing monopoly of power within Big Labor, Big Government, Big Minorities, and—to a lesser extent—Big Business, must sound extremely cogent. To the view that giant organizations control the electoral process—by duping and bribing the "less ambitious" segments of the population—there corresponds their own feeling of being deprived of the political power they believe to be rightfully theirs.

One must reject the view that the Goldwater movement is simply an irrational response to a world the Goldwaterites do not understand and cannot contend with. Granted there is among them a large measure of irrationality, particularly on nuclear matters. Granted there is an incredible blindness to the decisive role business has played in the very developments which have irritated the movement into being. It must nevertheless be conceded that an analysis which locates the forces hostile to an older life-style in the corporate relations of government, minority group, business and labor elites, can appear to be quite reasonable. Attacks on the pow-

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er elite, on the senselessness of current social directions, and on the dehumanization of ordinary living, are no less rational for not having been expressed in the language of Mills, Riesman or Goodman.

If I am correct in assuming that Goldwater and his associates are exploiting a widespread social protest, at least two important conclusions may be drawn. First, defeats such as the one inflicted in the November elections will not destroy the movement. The dynamism of a class seeking political expression should enable the movement to overcome that kind of disappointment. It is clear, moreover, that numbers of potential Goldwater voters were deterred from casting their ballots for so unsteady a man as Barry Goldwater. On election eve, one such person told me he had voted against Goldwater precisely because he believed the Arizonan incapable of controlling those desirable international crises which his essentially wise policies would provoke. If this view was common, then the movement could resolve its tactical problems merely by replacing Goldwater with a saner Goldwaterite, just as Burch was exchanged for Bliss. And while the movement has been forced to compromise within the Republican National Committee and is unlikely to recapture the presidential nomination in 1964, it will retain considerable power at state and local levels.

Second, we may expect that the movement will grow rather than decline. Given certain conventional assumptions about prospective changes in the economy, the movement of traditionally blue collar people into occupations demanding greatly increased training will accelerate. The prospect, therefore, is for growth in precisely those groups which now find political expression in the Goldwater movement or nowhere at all.

Furthermore, as technological changes increase more rapidly, the accompanying social changes will grow more abrupt and profound. Sharper clashes between one's expectations and one's actual life, a widespread and realistic fear of unemployment, and an intensifying feeling of helplessness in the face of malignant events, are likely to form the common experience of the new middle class in the next decade. It is this experience that nationalist, racist, anti-egalitarian and authoritarian ideologies will continue to exploit.

Minimizing the effect of such ideologies involves checking those dominant trends which now disenfranchise and alienate the new middle class. Contemporary social analysis indicates what these trends are. Foremost is the growth in scale of our social institutions, which tends to locate initiative exclusively within insulated elites and to separate the direction of social activities from those who perform and suffer them. The problem is intensified by an increasing tendency among elites in government, business and labor to define their publics as the leaders of other bureaucracies and to act primarily with the expectations of these bogus publics in mind.

We are now faced with a growing movement of social protest against these centralizing trends. There are hopeful possibilities, however, that the protest can be turned to democratic and humane purposes. Whether this

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can be done will depend in part on the ability of left intellectuals to shake loose from some of their ideological heritage.

The fact is that liberal and socialist writers have taken ambiguous positions with respect to these trends. Centralization has been seen as reinforcing the rationality of planning against the blindness of the market; efficiency, progress, and science against waste, stagnation, and superstition. In particular, the growth of the Executive Department of the Federal government—in many ways the crown of the whole process—has been presented as the triumph of popular will over private industrial caprice. Such notions can be maintained, however, only by ignoring the evidence of Engler, Kolko, Nossiter and others that to the degree the Federal government assumes authority in economic matters, it becomes the willing minority partner of the economic interests involved. The capture of the regulatory commissions by the regulatees is merely the most obvious development in this area. Nor does centralization create economic and social efficiency. Planned obsolescence, gaudy over-packaging, and the desperate promotion of otherwise dormant demand are clearly incompatible with traditional notions of efficiency.

Among the chief supports of these trends and their social consequences is the continuing acceptance on the part of social critics that they are in some sense inevitable. But if these trends no longer represent progress, if they daily grow more dangerous to the democratic fabric, and if they present lively possibilities of social chaos, then the way is cleared to examine seriously—and to reject—the claim that they are inevitable. Is the task of the progressive intellectual to extract democratic values out of increasingly hostile technological and social directions? Or should he instead work to devise political and economic institutions which will enhance freely chosen sets of values? Either adjustment or creation must prevail as the defining characteristic of progressive ideology—and adjustment becomes increasingly more difficult, dangerous and sterile.

Consequently, our initial question—has the Goldwater movement a future? —turns (decisively, I believe) on the ability of intellectuals to solve three related problems:

- What, if any, are the institutional innovations which would enable the new middle class to develop life styles enhancing personal independence and responsible work, and which would consequently enable it to play a more decisive role in national political life?

- What strategies and new appeals can induce the new middle class to seek a more adequate expression of its needs than that now offered by the right?

- How can the dissatisfaction of the new middle class be related to the civil rights movement and to the tentative beginnings of protest among the white poor and unemployed?

The way in which these questions are answered—or not answered—will be a decisive factor in the next decade of American political life.

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The Alliance for Progress

Requiescat in Pace?

We viewed the original Kennedy program for Latin America (Alliance for Progress) with a good deal of scepticism, but welcomed the proclaimed ideals behind it. For one thing, it gave recognition to the fact that money and grants in themselves, if poured down the bottomless pit of corrupt Latin American dictatorships, only serve in the end to strengthen such regimes. The Alliance for Progress, did, therefore, even if timidly, openly pose the need for internal social revolutions by which élitist rule would be replaced by popularly-based democratic rule, along with social and economic measures long urged by Latin American socialists and democrats.

It would be unfair to question what might have happened to the Alliance if Kennedy had lived. Certain examples—the story of Peru, for example—added to one's doubts; on the other hand, the handling of the Venezuelan crisis was more promising.

Now, however, under Johnson the program has turned sour to the point where its former director, Teodoro Moscoso, has openly charged betrayal (*New York Times,* February 18, 1965).

> "We are still using money," says Mr. Moscoso, "but do we remember that there is a revolution going on?"

By revolution, the former head of the Alliance for Progress simply refers to the unrest prevalent in Latin American countries, coupled with their social and economic improvement. Kennedy, continues Moscoso, sought to understand and come to terms with this situation by supporting revolutionary changes in the structure of traditional Latin American society, that is, the dictatorship of militarists and landlords.

The shift away from the Kennedy conception of the Alliance began some time ago with the replacement of Moscoso by Thomas C. Mann, a conservative-oriented bureaucrat who immediately adopted a new tone toward Latin America. Recent military takeovers were either ignored or quickly extended diplomatic recognition; the program itself was more narrowly conceived in terms of "aid," not the possible long-range structural changes which the influx of capital employed along certain directions might advance.

The Alliance for Progress thus seems destined to become another routine program, with its political content liquidated and its possible revolutionary implications dissolved. S. P.

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Paul Goodman

BERKELEY IN FEBRUARY

What follows are not further accounts of the Berkeley events—we are sure our readers have read enough of those—but considerations of their significance. This February DISSENT *sent Paul Goodman to Berkeley in order to survey the repercussions of the student uprising; his report follows. Michael Miller, a graduate student in English at the University of California, presents a student view. And finally, we round out this section with a sensational report from the University of Kiev.*—EDITORS

The dominant system of society is critically dependent on the schools, especially the universities. Schools provide the brainpower for the scientific technology. They are wistfully expected, beginning with age 3, to bring everybody into the mainstream of economic usefulness; and more realistically, they process the professional personnel to control the increasing scores of millions useless to the economy, the out-caste poor, displaced farmers, people over 65, unemployable adolescents who must be regimented. Just as part of the Gross National Product, I have heard the estimate that more than 40% of the cash is in the Knowledge business.

The organization of all this, however, is calculated by the powers-that-be amazingly without regard to the thoughts or feelings of those who are to be "educated." (50% of the total population is under 25.) Establishment forecasts of the future almost never mention the response of the young as a factor; yet that response, whether as anomie or as insistence on more freedom and meaning than the system allows will be crucial. And if we take it into account, we see that the dominant system is probably unviable. Simply, it is not moral enough to grow up into.

The education has become mere exploitation—the abuse of the abilities and time of life of school youth for others' purposes. As I have put it elsewhere, it is the first time in history that a dominant class has imposed on its free children the discipline of slaves. And the exploita-

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tion itself is of a peculiarly difficult and deadly kind, for it involves not merely forced time and labor, but active intellectual participation by the exploited, in learning and even in being original and creative under duress.* This is not viable. There must be both breakdown and revolutionary break-through; and recently I have come to hope that *freedom and meaning will outweigh anomie.* Needless to say, I am in love with that, and with Berkeley in February.

In my opinion, the situation at Berkeley is historical and will not be local. The calm excitement and matter-of-fact democracy and human contact now prevalent on the Berkeley campus are in revolutionary contrast to our usual demented, inauthentic, overadministered American society. This ordinary freedom had to be won by risky commitment, finding solidarity, living through fear; and its ferment will spread not only to other campuses but finally to other institutions of society.

The movement of the Negroes and their wise white friends, mainly youth, has been encouraging toward change; and probably our society cannot incorporate its outcastes without revolutionary changes in structure. Nevertheless, the shape of reconstruction cannot, in my opinion, appear among marginal groups; they do not have enough culture, science, and technique to work a good modern society, though plenty of spirit and justice. But the rising of students and of professors recalled to manhood occurs in the best of the middle-class itself and in the center of the economy; the shape of reconstruction *can* appear here. Not accidentally, the movement for the outcaste has sparked and energized this more central revolution, and we will finally come to the real issues: the revival of democracy, the human use of technology, and getting rid of war.

As a University man, let me put it this way: Our society has been playing with the fire of mass higher learning; it is our duty to let it feel the blast of University truth.

2. *Calm Excitement*

During their troubles last winter, Berkeley students kept phoning me—at 3 a.m. Eastern time—in various states of fever, alarm, and despair; but then after a single shout of "Victory!" after the Faculty Senate de-

* I am using the word "exploitation" strictly. It is hard for people in the labor movement to understand this term as applied to students. Harry Bridges, e.g., seems to feel that the Berkeley students were pampered brats; they never had it so good. We would do well to recall Marx's description of the 9-year-olds picking straw, not because this was economically valuable but as training in work-habits. Besides, we must notice that nearly 50% of the young are now kept in schools till 21 and 22 years of age; previously most of them would have been in the factories, etc., for 4 or 5 years by that age.

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cision in their favor, I heard nothing further. (Except for a New Year's Eve visit from Steve Weissman, one of the most thoughtful leaders of the Free Speech Movement, who was now interested in "University Reform.")

My expectation, on visiting in February, was that there would be deep depression. They had won their demand to advocate political action, like any other citizen. The Civil Rights energy, which had obviously been strong, could hardly continue animating them, since it was not essentially a campus issue at all. The election being over, Senator Knowland had subsided. And most important, they seemed to have no future goal to grow toward, to inspirit them. Indeed, reading the FSM's voluminous broadsides and pamphlets, I was appalled at the low level of analysis by such bright people. There was little ideology—which was good—but there was also almost no economics, history, or philosophy. Rather, endless pages about the First and Fourteenth Amendments, gripes about the violation of due process, and proofs of the ambiguities of Clark Kerr, all relevant but not newsy.

I was wrong. Instead of depression, I found what I have called "calm excitement"—the phrase belongs to a youth in the establishment-oriented student Government. (During the troubles, the Associated Students were rather unfriendly to the FSM, but part of the "calm excitement" is a *spreading* among the students of the insistence on freedom and meaning.) My error was that I did not realize that every step of the students' fight was desperately immediate, unchartered, and uncharted. But therefore the fruit of it was character-change, the first opening of new possibilities. Beautifully, a moral struggle has given the students a *habit* of good faith and commitment, and their solidarity has turned into community, like the auroral flush of a good society.

The existential language that I am beginning to slip into is entirely the students' own. It is the lingua franca of the revolutionary campus, and is used with simplicity and conviction. (When, on another campus like Ann Arbor, I listen to even a fine group like the Students for a Democratic Society, their talk of "strategy" etc. is grating by comparison.) At Berkeley, there is a sprinkling of neo-Marxist lingo but it is noticeably heavy and dispiriting, except for an occasional Maoism, which is Chinese.

3. Good Faith and Commitment

On February 10 occurred a curious dialogue between Jerry Byrne, the special counsel of a committee of the Regents of the University of California to investigate "the causes of student unrest," and a group of students from the government, newspapers, religious organizations, and leaders of the former FSM (now FU, movement for a Free University).

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Byrne is a frank and likable guy, a lawyer, and I had previous evidence that he was earnest and somewhat unorthodox. He explained to the students his mandate and the questionnaire and interview methods that he intended to employ. He intended, he said, to be objective; he had chosen assistants from outside of Berkeley; he had no ax to grind; he meant business. He would present his recommendations to the Regents in three months. Were there any questions?

A slim dark-eyed youth spoke up: "Mr. Byrne, we have been through an existential moment. A composite picture of 'public' student opinion will not reveal our meaning." I take it that this meant that so-called objective methods would get him nowhere. "Yes," another student said, "Ideas don't pop out of data."

Byrne did not seem to grasp this epistemological subtlety; he assured the young man that he had "found students able to dissociate themselves from events last fall and simply work to future improvement." Later, however, the Counsel said to me privately, "When that boy looked up at me, his eyes pierced to the bottom of my soul—there was no use in trying to lie to them. The discussion rose to another plane."

Another student (Mario Savio) asked a down-to-earth question: Was there any guarantee that the Regents would release the Byrne recommendations? No, said Jerry, they were the Regents' property. (But the Regents, gasped somebody else, were notorious for *falsifying* scholarly work, specifically a report on *braceros* made by the University.) Savio persisted: "How can the students cooperate with a report for the Regents, if the Board of Regents is itself a morally illegitimate body? how can *it* be the judge?" The bother was that the Regents consisted almost entirely of multimillionaires in aircraft, oil, banks, shipping, etc., with Max Rafferty representing Education!

The question now was whether they ought morally to be talking to Byrne at all, since his mandate was inauthentic. It was not that they questioned *his* integrity, a student assured him kindly. About this time, the Counsel's unfailing friendly smile began to tighten, so that it became increasingly impossible for him to get into contact with them, unless he wiped off the smile, which he couldn't do. Unluckily, none of the students knew enough psychosomatic medicine to point this out to him, and I kept my mouth shut. "Yes," said a student, "it's the genius of administration to turn a nice guy like you into a fink." "How do we know that the student opinion we give you won't be subpoenaed for the trial?" somebody asked ominously. Jerry firmly and believably declared that this would not happen.

A bright idea suggested itself. They could publish the interviews

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in progress, while they were still the students' property, so to speak; they could make tapes! Jerry vetoed this with alarm. "Then what *can* you suggest for us to do, what *action,* beginning *right now,* that will put pressure on the Regents and guarantee some results?"—a student asked this very earnestly.

"How was I supposed to answer that!" Jerry complained to me later. "In one corner was a reporter from the *Chronicle,* in another a reporter from the *Examiner,* and they ask me to suggest an action to coerce the Regents—" Some more *action* from the students of Berkeley was not, exactly, what the Regents were after! "Oh, why didn't you just explain that to them, Jerry,—with a smile? They're hip kids."

"Why," asked a young lady, "is Unrest something that must be 'remedied'?" "How far will the inquiry probe? Might the report suggest that government of the University should be given over to the students and faculty? Would the range of questions include whether UCAL should accept war contracts?" "Why," asked a young fellow, "not let a Thousand Flowers Bloom?"—to my ear this question was entirely innocent, without desire to shock.

The Counsel fielded the questions well and generously. But he did not seem to satisfy. "Don't you see, Jerry," I said finally, they want you to show a burning zeal to improve their school, and you're not showing it." "I don't feel any burning zeal," cried Jerry, "I just want to do a good honest job, and I intend to do it." "There you are," said Savio, "why don't you quit?"—But to my ear, this was said without hostility, even affectionately. It meant, quit them and join *us,* and put your talents to an authentic use.

My total impression, indeed, was that the students, including the stars of the former FSM, intended to cooperate with the Counsel in his further study. They would follow the maxim of Gandhi: Always Cooperate. But they would be exquisitely simple in what they are doing and therefore far brighter than Jerry Byrne; and in the long run he would learn more from them than he, with his auspices, would be able to do for them.

4. Community

It is vividly clear on the Berkeley campus that there has been a breakthrough into communication, community. The causation seems to have been classical: justified protest, risky commitment, surprising solidarity and the development of mutual trust, shaking fear met with uncalculating courage, and then the breakthrough into the joyous feeling that "we have a say in the University," "it is our home," "we are free human beings."

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They even speak of a founding Event, presumably the Faculty Senate vote that "justified" the students. (Correspondingly, Professor Wolin speaks of the "Faculty's finest hour," as if the Faculty had been revived and "justified" by the students!) "There occurred on this campus the first human Event in 40,000 years," Michael Rossman assured me—I did not press him for the predecessor. Savio told me with scorn and amazement of a registrar who *after* the Event still tried to enforce a petty rule: "Don't you realize, I told her, that something *happened* yesterday?" The existential theory seems to be that by acting in freedom they made history, and conversely, the historical event made them free. (In a letter to the new Chancellor, Martin Meyerson, John Seeley of Brandeis speaks of the students' action as "the Boston Tea Party.")

An unknown professor came up to me and said, "Since those kids acted up, I feel twenty years younger."

So far as the essence of a community of scholars is the personal relation of students and teachers, Berkeley has already accomplished University Reform and Jerry Byrne's inquiry need go no further.* But in fact, in freedom, there is a buzz of activity toward legislating new institutions. Let me give a few examples.

The "Free University" is a para-university of voluntary study-groups off-campus, in which the collaboration of a teaching-assistant or assistant-professor is invited. (Typical subjects, *Moral Responsibility and the Sciences, Marx and Freud, History of the Oppression of Women).* At a session I attended *(Anarchism),* a young lady complained rather tearfully that if they invited a professor to the next meeting just because he knew a lot about the subject, it would be just like the ordinary University; but the others, who were mostly graduates and undergraduates in History, assured her that the professor was very young. FU plans also "to launch projects for the general welfare of the larger community," e.g. a summer project to organize migrant farm labor; and not least, "to look into the nature of the University of California's financial connections, controls imposed on funds, indirect pressures on Professors."

To lighten the student load, I asked the new Chancellor—or Acting Chancellor, it is hard to know**—if academic credit couldn't be given for

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* A former student of mine at Sarah Lawrence explained to me: "When Amy and I first came out, we didn't know anybody, so we invited our professor to tea. The other students thought that we were simply wierd. But now it wouldn't be unusual." —This illustrates, by the way, that student-faculty estrangement is a two-way street. The paranoia of the students toward the grown-ups is probably stronger than the indifference of the professors toward the young.

** Since I wrote this, Kerr and Meyerson "resigned" and were retained apparently as a bid for a vote of confidence against the reactionary wing of the Regents.

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the para-courses, if they met certain standards. He could see no objection. A Regent, however, thought that the reactionaries in the Legislature might balk at some of the titles. . . .

Faculty proposals for University Reform—e.g. by Profs. Tussman and Trow—tend to small voluntary colleges within the University. In one model, 150 students and 10 professors will agree to study some Area or Issue that transcends departmental lines (as a gimmick to get around the entrenched Chairmen?). Professor Searle tells me that he had already tried such voluntary seminars last year, but the *students* didn't come—they needed the support of Credits and the Official Syllabus; but perhaps it would be better now.

I discussed these Faculty proposals with a Regent, who declared that they would cost too much. I think he is wrong. In my opinion, administrators misestimate by applying to a different, decentralized system, the costs that belong to the present over-centralized system. At present the Multiversity operates by tightly holding together essentially disparate parts; inevitably a tremendous amount of money is spent on administrative cement. This process, as I have shown elsewhere, usually leads to a mark-up of 3–400% over actual educational costs. Of course, from the Multiversity point of view, the inflation is more than paid for by rich contracted research, no matter what, and government and foundation grants.

Professor Leggett, the sociologist, has already instituted (I think) an ingenious form of democracy for a lecture course. Each section elects two delegates who sit with him and the teaching-assistants at fortnightly meetings that criticize the course and chart its further progress. The little council is called a Soviet.

Chancellor Meyerson told me a good idea. He is after some Ford money for a community project in Oakland. This could be manned by students for academic credit as well as pay. In turn I proposed to him the following: Instead of discontinuing the department of Journalism, as seems to be in the offing, rather make it for real by putting out a good daily newspaper which the Bay Area sorely needs. (It is interesting to speculate how Senator Knowland, who owns the Oakland paper, would take this competition, while CORE, recruited from the University, pickets his door for unfair labor practices!)

The Chancellor's best idea for University Reform, however, is a kind of tacit understanding between him and the students—at least so I have been told—that certain idiotic rules, which ought not to exist, need not necessarily be enforced in every jot and tittle.

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I was crossing the campus with a Regent and he suddenly asked me, "Do you notice much change since you were here a couple of years ago?" "What are you driving at?" I asked. "Don't you think it's—more lively, more interesting?" "Oh Bill," I cried, "why can't you say that publicly? the kids would be so proud." "How can I say that in my position?" said the Regent. (His name is William Coblentz.) "Don't call them kids!" he said, "they're students."*

5. *"Failure of Communication"*

I have been describing a very simple situation, a kind of Fourth of August when the French barons gave up their feudal dues. (Alas! it probably won't last much longer than the Fourth of August, but let's not yet look into the future.) It is a situation where people talk to one another, mean what they say and intend to act on it, and therefore could conceivably improve their common lot. Is this extraordinary?

It is said that there was a "breakdown of communication" in Berkeley. There was, but why? The failure of communication is not an isolated cause but is endemic in the structure of American society and in the Multiversity as part of it. There is a limitless amount of information, polling, data-processing, and decision-making by objective computation; yet when the chips are down, it turns out that nobody has expressed himself or been understood. Given its exploiting motives, it is impossible for American education to take the young seriously, except as objects to manipulate.**

It seemed odd that Clark Kerr, who had made a reputation as a mediator in labor disputes, should have failed so badly precisely in communications. But indeed he acted impeccably as a professional mediator; he kept the parties apart in order to negotiate their demands. Unfortunately, good faith and commitment are in principle not negotiable; the students were not making "offers" with the intention of "settling" for something different. And in the context of a community of scholars, the technique suddenly appeared as obscene. When students and professors insisted that he, the mediator, was a party to the dispute and must confront them, Kerr's behavior was sociopathological. There were

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* Something like calling a Negro "boy." In many a Town-Gown fracas, the analogy of student and Negro is pretty obvious. At present in the town of Berkeley itself, there is an urban Renewal plan to clean up a street which, to me, seems very pleasant and lively, but it *is* occupied by students and their beatnik cronies.

** This can be so hypocritical as to be nauseating. For instance, while I am writing this there is a to-do at Cornell about a marijuana "ring." This comes under the rubric of paternal concern, yet girls are dragged out of classes and dormitories to be grilled by FBI-men without counsel.

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cases when he would not speak directly to professors *by phone* but insisted on an intermediary. When the students were occupying Sproul Hall, he stayed at home and would not speak to them. Clinging to a petty ruling, he kept Regents and professors in separate rooms at the airport.

More seriously, there is evidence that men whom he involved as his intermediaries became utterly demoralized.

Inevitably, the militant students were caught in the toils and became administrative. Dealing with probably benevolent professors, they had to bring lawyers and speak through them, and they became acute experts in their rights under various Amendments to the Constitution of the United States. Yet what they ultimately wanted was just to be told the truth: E.g., if the tables were banned because of traffic congestion, why, when the aisles were kept clear, were the tables *still* banned? Instead they were told another lie.

Or so it seemed to them. But they were making a naive metaphysical error. They imagined that a mediator, one who avoids conflicts and negotiates, is a human being like you or me and makes propositions that are true or false. Thus they felt lied to and tricked and they got enraged. But they were really dealing with a juggling robot. Now, for a spell, disabused of their error, they can be serene—armed.

To be fair to Kerr, I doubt that it is possible, with honor, to avoid conflict among the forces working at the University of California: Birchite legislators, racist newspapers, Max Rafferty, the Atomic Energy Commission, Civil Rights, professors who might suddenly recall the Western tradition, students who might be naively moral. The only honorable alternatives are to quit, as Buell Gallagher did, or sometimes to take a stand and fight.

A Cuban student, not a Castroite, said to me, "Kerr made the same mistake as the U.S.A. with regard to Cuba. By refusing to talk, he left a vacuum. The extremists moved into it. Through the extremists, the mass discovered it had a community."

6.

Besides the calm excitement and community, there is a third property of Berkeley in February that I, at least, found overwhelming: the fantastically expert organization of the students, as if for instant action *en masse*. Yet there does not seem to be top-down domination. The "leading figures" are rather easy-going, there is no jockeying for position, there is no party-line, and it looks as if new faces easily come to the fore. But as soon as there is an activity, the guerrillas are out in force.

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There is an evident discipline to attend meetings—naturally many students lost academic credit for the fall term. The Free University sponsored a speech of mine and 3500 students attended. When it was known I wanted to write this report, at once I received a list of key names and contacts all arranged: "he will phone you at 3:45"—one expected 15:45. They have put out phonograph records: Joan Baez songs, *FSM's Sounds and Songs of the Demonstration,* and a remarkable long-player of the Sproul Hall sit-in and the meeting of the Faculty Senate. The quantity of printed material is simply appalling. And a related aspect is the careful sociological research—one can learn immediately that 53% of students in FSM favored sit-ins before the movement started; there are precise political-science analyses of contending forces, legal briefs, property-holdings of each Regent. Never in history, I guess, has a spontaneous uprising been so meticulously polled. The students might object to the factory-University, but they have certainly mastered its arts and sciences.

It is a remarkable phenomenon, a kind of hyper-organized anarchy. Perhaps it is a way of creating a Free University in the conditions of high technology; if so—I am speaking seriously—it is a major social invention. Myself, I find it oppressive. My opinion is that when they begin to reach for positive cultural goods, rather than engaging in resistance and defense, they will have to become shaggier. But maybe I am prejudiced against social sciences—a writer—from the Twenties.

The proper function of such a disciplined student body, I think, is not to be the Free University, which must consist in piecemeal voluntary associations between teachers and students, but to be the Student Government, responsible for social and political rules; collective bargaining agent on food, housing, tuition and other finances; guardian of *Lernfreiheit* against administrative encroachments like grading, excessive courses, unreasonable policies of admission and transfer; mutual aid and self-protection against the local police.

7.

Let us turn to a broader question: what is the relation of a liberated University to social change in the general community?

It was evident in the fall that the movement for the Negroes was a major background cause for the Free Speech Movement. It was part of the immediate bone of contention, the banning of recruiting; and more important, leaders who had taken their risks in Mississippi were not afraid to sit in against Clark Kerr.

Yet in February I did not hear a *single* spontaneous mention of this

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struggle. Testing, I raised the issue provocatively and was routinely put right and turned off. One of the leaders, Rossman, then explained to me that interest in Civil Rights was simply part of one's commitment, and it was exactly equivalent to the problem of making a classroom for real. (Rossman himself is a section-man in mathematics; he teaches "intuitive" mathematics—I did not have the chance to pursue whether this meant school of Brouwer or something else.) "Don't get me wrong," he said, "I picket *seriously;* just the same, it's a place to see the girls and sometimes we have a great time. It's our way of living."* He had a thing about Abstract Values being entirely dead for his generation, though they had had meaning for "my father and grandfather." I tried to show him that, for some of us, Social Justice with capital letters was not abstract but a concrete property of a tolerable environment, just like unpolluted rivers; and he was visibly impressed by the idea that a 3-year-old divides the candy-bar with another child for symmetry. (Maybe this was "intuitive" mathematics.)

In my opinion, the matrix of a community in which political action is a custom, is essential for the American future. And it is different, in both genesis and meaning, from the Solidarity engendered by fighting for political Causes. Those hostile to FSM have emphasized the number of off-campus participants, who are then called outside agitators, Maoists, Castroites, etc.; contrariwise, the champions of the students then prove that the outsiders are mostly alumni, wives, temporary dropouts. But historically, it is better to consider these university-centered politically active communities in terms of a "withdrawal" from the absurd System and its problems, and a return on more authentic premises.**

Consider the history of Beat youth as a type. The withdrawal into voluntary poverty, the community of the Illuminati, kicks On the Road, and finger-painting, did not provide much world. Yet almost from the beginning there were social needs that *were* taken for real, especially banning the Bomb, thwarting the Fuzz, and supporting Negroes and Spanish because they were friends and equally out-caste. In California specifically, it was hard not to join in the rage at HUAC; but even more important was the horror at the Chessman execution: here *was* the

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* None of this was news to me. Several years ago I noted that students of Fair Play for Cuba had no "political" interest in Castro, but were enchanted by a young leader who spoke to everybody on the street and wrangled on national TV with conspirators against his life. To speak proleptically, he was not like—Clark Kerr.

** I suppose this is what these young people mean by their abuse of the word "Alienation." Certainly in Marxist or psychiatric terms they are less alienated than most other people. Hopefully, if they continue a path of commitment, they will discover they are "alienated" in Luther's meaning!

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threatening Machine literally destroying human life, just as Camus had said.

Inevitably, in this return to involvement, there was joining with proper politicals. But *the event has been not that the young exiles have been politicalized but that politics have been "existentialized" and brought into the community, even containing the dreadful sex and hasheesh.* And this is not because philosophy and pleasure have seduced people from the realities of life, but because *the thoughts and feelings of the young have been more relevant to the underlying realities of modern times,* the drive to rationalization, the abuse of high technology, and the hardware GNP, statism and the Bomb. These abuses occur in every modern country and ideology, whether U.S.A., U.S.S.R., China, or even the emergent African states; and Great Society, Neo-Marxism, and even moral Pacifism do not fundamentally address them.

Come now to the University. A basic trait of the young is that they don't know much, but also, beautifully, that they want to learn something and they hang around hopefully relevant teachers. The young Beats, of course, made a thing of voluntary ignorance like voluntary poverty; and the young Hippies boringly went in for tip-top expertise —they knew all about Black Boxes and Motivational Research—without knowing anything. But pretty soon young people were bound to gravitate, or gravitate back, to the University, as cronies of students, or as auditors, or unmatriculated students, or as diffident and choosy students. To have a chance to learn something was a great advance for the dissident community; and it was certainly a vast advantage for the University to be infiltrated by a new breed of students who demanded authenticity and practical application. Yet, genetically and persistently, this fringe University community—with its own readings and music, political actions, free sexuality and hasheesh—is not identical with the *in loco parentis* and late-adolescent American college community. And administrators, incidentally, have heightened the tension by dissolving the fraternity system. Some of the young are then penned up in rule-ridden dormitories (built with Federal funds but rented at high rates); but the more spirited go off-campus and get lost in the fringe community.

The new community, returning to the University and magnetizing the collegians, is by its genesis and nature not simply economically exploitable, unlike the ordinary college community which is at the top of the 16- to 20-year ladder of school-processing. In principle, it has dropped out and returned. And it resists in the University the identical Organized System that it resists outside. It is suspicious of being "vocationally guided"—though unfortunately it does not yet have much sense of true

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Vocation. Correspondingly, it is resentful of the jet-set faculty busy with contracted research; and it correctly interprets the so-called "orientation to the discipline rather than to teaching" as nothing but careerism. Unfortunately, again, however, there is not yet any sense of what a real University of professionals would consist in. (I shall return to this.)

8. The New University Constitution

In the circumstances, there is an uncanny re-emergence of the primitive medieval University, with its fat-cat professors lecturing in the central halls, a ragged student community living in its own neighborhood, and, astoundingly, a new student leadership by the graduates and teaching-assistants, the very Masters of Arts who used to cause all the trouble in 1200! One would have expected, in the era of the Organization Man, that precisely the bright graduate-students, the junior-executives, would be the most conformist, to protect their status and advancement; yet we see at Berkeley that the teaching-assistants provided leaders and almost unanimously went on strike.

But as well as being a medieval fringe, the students *also* want "personal contact" with the dignitaries, as in a small American boarding-school. On the one hand they distrust everybody over 30; on the other, they want the professors to become part of the fringe community, to give it intellectual structure and selfassurance. And finally, as American citizens, they want self-rule, not only of their own social life like the medieval student-government, but also to have a say in the administrative and curricular doings: that is, the distant Regents are regarded as illegitimate. This novel amalgam, then, of a fringe community of the young and masters of arts; "personal relations" between the students and the professors; and student membership on the Board of Regents—this amalgam is the Free University.

On the campus, this ramshackle constitution proved to have political power. The organized guerrillas sat in. Then, "when the teaching-assistants went out," said a professor, "it was all over, for we can't run the school without them, and if we fired them, we'd never get another good graduate in California." And then the Faculty, as Professor Wolin has put it, "stirred to ancestral memories of the ideal of a community of scholars bound together in the spirit of friendly persuasion and pledged to truth rather than abundance."—So the Governor had to send his troopers and for a couple of days Clark Kerr's Multiversity ceased to exist.

The question is: if such a Free University exists in the offing, to whom, to what government, will the Federal government, the founda-

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tions, and the corporations channel all that money that is the fuel of modern education? It's as bad as dealing with Saigon.

9. *University Truth*

The enigma remains the Faculty.

Let me recall a scrap of conversation with the new Chancellor. He was pointing out to me that the chief obstacle to University Reform was the teachers, inflexible, narrow, specialist, status-seeking. I cut him short impatiently: "Administrators have parroted this story to me verbatim at 50 colleges across the country. The fact is that for a hundred years you have cut their balls off and now you say they are impatient. Delegate power!" Meyerson reddened; he is himself a strong and broad mind, a professor, and, I suppose, an excellent teacher. A couple of days later he said to the counsel of the Regents, "Goodman is right. Administration turns them into eunuchs and then complains that they are eunuchs."

The overwhelming Faculty vote for the students seems to have been a reaction of nausea at the Administration's lies, its subservience to outside pressures, its pathological avoidance of contact, and finally the presence of the cops. This is the kind of nausea that recalls decent but self-centered people to their plain duty. Professor Wolin says, the Faculty was "shocked out of its shameful neglect of teaching, its acquiescence in the bureaucratization of the University," and it recovered its "collective conscience." These explanations must be substantially accurate for they lead to the evident February situation of friendly contact with the students and cooperation in "University Reform" toward *Lernfreiheit,* student democracy, Faculty resumption of counselling, and so forth.

Nevertheless, although this breakthrough is splendid for the teachers as human beings—if professors don't like to associate with young people, why in the devil do they hang around schools?—in my opinion it does nothing for them as men. The revival of manhood can occur only if they come on again in the world as the University, as the protector of civilized standards, the professors of truth that makes a difference, and, in our country, the blasting critic of social baseness and lies. Every division and department is falling short. For instance, the University of California has "classified research," but this is entirely incompatible with the tradition of Western science and its theory as consensus. (Some great universities have refused such contracts.) There is, in the country, censorship and managed news in utter contradiction to the principle of the Humanities. The sex and narcotics laws of the com-

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munity are grounded in superstitions that it is the business of the biological and social sciences publicly to expose, just as the Eastern professors exposed the hoax of the Shelter program. The engineers and architects do not speak as Faculties about the community-destroying Urban Renewal; and the education department does not speak as a Faculty about the compulsory mis-education, or at least Max Rafferty.

I don't think that the students can much help their professors to remember *these* ancient duties. The professors will have to come to their own resolve. But if they do, I think that the students of Berkeley will be proud of them, and I think the students will begin to understand what it is to have not only a free university but a University altogether.

I have tried to point out that the Regents and the new Chancellor could easily accept a more flexible, decentralized, and human "free university." (I don't mean that they *will*, for the Bourbons never learn and never forget.) But I don't think that University truth is acceptable in our society, any more than the democratic action of the Free Speech Movement is *finally* acceptable.

I mentioned these things to a couple of liberal Regents and they turned pale. The new Chancellor didn't seem to relish them either—maybe I am wrong. And since the students asked me to address them, I talked about them at a mass meeting on the campus. (It was an unnerving scene: the planes kept roaring over my head on their way across the Pacific to Vietnam.) To my judgment, the students did not dig what I was saying; they do not have much memory of the tradition of the West. They know what freedom is—yes, they do—but they don't really know what a University is. Kind of to encourage them, I told them of two ancient examples, where revolt in the University led to great social revolutions. First, the Averroists, the new science, the rediscovered Aristotle: this was squelched and "harmonized" after a fierce struggle at Paris, yet it persisted and brought on, at Padua, the heroic age of modern science; it took less than 400 years! And it took only 250 years for the University revolt of Wyclif and Hus to bring on the University-led Reformation.

The Berkeley students didn't much relish the thought of Hus at the stake, but they were crazy for the Wyclifites at Oxford standing on the ramparts and fighting off the King with bows and arrows.

New York City
Feb. 1965.

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Michael V. Miller

THE STUDENT STATE OF MIND

I

Nearly everyone who has tried to account for the recent uprising on the Berkeley campus has drawn a picture of students struggling for identity in a vast, impersonal educational and research factory run by IBM cards, remote professors subsidized by federal funds, and administrators with the temperaments of corporation executives. This analysis has the curious effect of making University of California President Clark Kerr the prophet of the student revolution against his administration. Kerr's description of the bureaucratized "multiversity," set forth in his Godkin lectures at Harvard in 1963, has even been converted into an ideology of justification for the revolt by its leadership.

There is more than a grain of truth in this account. The students were waging war against absurdities and hypocrisies that seem endemic to modern bureaucracy. And no doubt some form of pervasive alienation drove numerous students into the fray. But however plausible it may be, the multiversity analysis portrays the landscape of the Berkeley rebellion without sufficient color or contour. The student assault upon the attempt of Berkeley deans to control their tiny strip of land at Bancroft and Telegraph Avenues marshalled support from students and faculty on a scale unprecedented at American universities. Freshmen whose minds had never been violated by a political thought, as well as hardened politicoes, became caught up in direct action in-fighting with the authorities. But all shades of motivation were functioning here, and alienation is only part of the story. Perhaps student supporters of the revolt could be lumped under three rough categories:

Some students derive gratification and a sense of meaning from their involvement in politics. They are the ones who have fought in the student movement on several fronts—against HUAC and capital punishment, for peace and civil rights. Rather than feeling that school has nothing to give them, they get good educations because they have found a way of making knowledge relevant, by immersing it in the social present. By and large, these seem to me among the least alienated students on campus, at least from themselves. But they did feel that alienation threatened when they saw the administration attempt to sever the connection between school and society.

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Another segment of the student body constitutes, more or less, a community of self-pity. It is made up mostly of older undergrads and a few beginning graduate students who have sulked through their years at Berkeley in a pose of militant sensitivity. These students tend to be bright and talented, yet feel themselves edging ever closer to a failure of self-realization. They like to see themselves as misunderstood and unable to communicate—and not only with professors; they have bittersweet histories of brief and tragic love affairs to relate. Now and then, they may leave school for New York or Europe on the hunt for significance, but they usually wend their way back to Berkeley.

Perhaps such students are a little too quick to blame their stifled creativity on the system, or their inability to find love on the structure of modern society. Their politics border on melodrama. They are the specialists in alienation.

My impression is that the revolt drew its leaders and its most vocal and committed supporters mainly from these two groups. With the final group, the vast mass of sympathizers who signed petitions, swelled the ranks of sit-ins, or went on strike, alienation is not so much the issue, although many are undoubtedly uneasy about the university's size and red-tape procedures. What enraged them was the realization that the administration was being overbearing and unfair by suddenly trying to chop the guts out of student politics, which are as much a part of Berkeley as its tradition of Nobel prize winners in science. And they feared that apparently arbitrary restriction on freedom in one area might quickly lead to similar infringements in others.

II

Many features of the impersonal machine exist at other large universities like Harvard, Columbia, or U.C.L.A., which is itself part of the west coast multiversity. Yet Berkeley is probably the only campus in the country where students could transform a general mood of restlessness and resentment into an effective political weapon against their administration. One of the most striking characteristics of the revolt was its interplay of spontaneity and efficient organization. When negotiations between students and deans over the original administration ban on political activity broke down, a few student organizations set up booths in protest. The administration threatened disciplinary action and subsequently suspended eight student leaders. Almost instantaneously a full-scale student movement was afoot with its organizers, orators, heroes ready to commit themselves to action, even martyrs.

Clearly a movement of such magnitude and sophistication could

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not have been born overnight—as the Free Speech Movement virtually was—without experienced tacticians to create it, in addition to widespread unrest to nourish it.

Students interested in tactics and ideology hang out on the Terrace, an elevated outdoor cafeteria in the student union complex with a touch of Left Bank atmosphere. The Terrace was already humming with discussion of the recent ban on politics last September 30, when five students who had manned political tables in defiance of the administration ruling were summoned to appear at a dean's office that afternoon. A couple of hours before this eventful appointment, a leading opponent of the ban stood near the Sather Gate entrance to campus and shouted at students coming off the Terrace, "All right, all you Terrace intellectuals, here's your chance finally to *do* something!" In this manner, he recruited many of the several hundred students who appeared later at the dean's office along with the five to protest the impending suspensions.

Those students who paused on their way to class from the Terrace are part of an important—by now even traditional—subculture of the Berkeley student body. A melting pot of campus intellectuals, aesthetes, and politicoes, it includes a lot of the "non-students" who have unjustly been used as a scapegoat by opponents of the FSM (most non-students involved in FSM activities are temporarily out of school, very recent graduates, university employees, or students' wives). Any afternoon in the week this crowd is found lounging between classes on the Terrace or in Telegraph Avenue's two coffee-houses arrayed in styles from classic beat to classic Harris tweed. Admittedly, its ranks contain a quota of the hipsters and revolutionary zealots concerned with little but the right names and phrases, the devotees of the latest chemical highs, the lunatic fringe of the avant-garde. But here also are a surprisingly large proportion of the most intellectually serious and morally alert students on campus, fellowship holders as well as veterans of the Mississippi wars. And sometimes the lines are extremely difficult to draw.

The bright and serious students in this group are the ones who demand the most from the university. They get good grades, although they often feel cynical about the system. Many of them are genuinely more concerned with putting knowledge of the past to work in the present than regurgitating it on a final. In a sense they are always putting administrators on the spot, because they believe that the educational process should provide a continuum between ideas and social and political action. For instance, when these students sit in for Negro rights in San Francisco or go off to register Negro voters in Mississippi, they are convinced that they are only carrying out a literal application of the

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democratic ideals they are supposed to memorize in the classroom. Such behavior unnerves the administration, which has to soothe the ruffled feelings of taxpayers and their representatives who grow anxious about the threats their sons and daughters are posing to the Established order.

III

The overall cast of Berkeley campus politics is distinctly to the left of center, despite a sprinkling of moderate Republicans and Goldwaterites. In general, the student political framework is flexible, communal, non-ideological. Of course there is plenty of organizational room for left-wing ideological temperaments in YSA, YPSL, the DuBois Club, and other groups. But Slate, the unaffiliated Berkeley political organization, has always been an issue-oriented and action-oriented group, a collectivity of political independents and various shades of socialists who came together to work on specific issues.

Political enthusiasm with an emphasis on action pervades the cultural habits of Berkeley student intellectuals to an extraordinary degree. This shows up even in their choice of entertainment. For instance, Bogart's films are among the most popular attractions at movie theaters around Berkeley just as they are in Cambridge, Massachusetts. At Harvard, the Bogart rage is mainly a cult of style. I have even heard of Harvard students parading through the Yard in early 1940's trench coats and snap-brim hats picked up in second-hand clothing stores. But the Berkeley film audience, though it digs the Bogie style, also tends to regard his films as ideological morality plays, in which Bogart, the lone-wolf private eye or soldier of fortune, risks his neck for his principles and eventually wins out over the fumbling, insensitive bureaucratic cops or military officers.

To understand the explosive nature of the administration's restriction on campus politics, one must bear in mind that political activities have become in the last few years a primary means of personal expression and social contact for numerous students. Because of its size and setup, the University of California does, after all, have some of the impersonal features of a modern metropolis. Students have had to build their own sense of community, and bonds formed in fighting for causes supply a powerful way of filling this need. When the administration suddenly barred all meaningful political activity from campus—recruiting members, soliciting funds, advocating action—it created a situation that threatened partially to rupture these bonds.

IV

Two features peculiar to the Berkeley campus have played an essen-

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tial part in determining the recent drift of student politics. In the first place, there is a running controversy between students, faculty, and administration about the nature of the university. Everything is forever being revised, from methods of registration and length of terms (about to be changed from semesters to quarters) to styles of architecture and, of course, rules governing student political behavior. Like the state itself, the University of California still feels new, a little rootless, unsure of the boundaries between itself and outside social forces. It is not surprising that Cal students feel they should have a say in shaping the university's image, their own role, even the society around them.

Secondly, the university is constantly buffeted by currents of animosity from the surrounding world. This puts students on the defensive and the administration under pressure. The campus atmosphere is modern and cosmopolitan; for several years now Berkeley has attracted urban youngsters who in previous times might have gone to the University of Chicago or C.C.N.Y. But the campus is enclosed by a typical conservative California town—and the two tend to grate on each other. Elderly Berkeley landladies often seem to loathe and fear the emancipated habits of students from whom they earn their bread and butter. Certain city councilmen cry out about once a week for investigations into student activities, both moral and political. Furthermore, Cal is a public school in a state the government of which contains a powerful minority on the right. A number of conservative state legislators make a habit of tossing bills in the hopper that promise to chop off large amounts of university budget unless the administration undertake purges of controversial students and faculty members.

Part of the local press is only too happy to abet the friction between the university and California taxpayers. For this purpose, Red-baiting and beatnik-baiting are favorite devices. Every now and then, the Berkeley *Gazette* prints a column of "campus news" written by ladies with three names who express profound shock over rumours of female students walking around campus in their bare feet. San Francisco *Chronicle* columnist Lucius Beebe, a self-styled connoisseur of expensive restaurants and rugged individualism, frequently launches attacks in atrocious polysyllabic rhetoric on the unwashed hordes of "Red Square in Berkeley" or "Kremlin West," as he alternately terms the school. One can imagine the attitude of William Knowland's paper, the Oakland *Tribune*.

V

During the height of the campus struggle, some newspaper reports, national magazine articles (including the liberal press on occasion), and

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statements by university administrators accused the FSM of being dupes for Castroite and Maoist agitators. Of course this is so much garbage; neither Peking- nor Havana-brand Communism had anything to do with FSM methods or goals. However, a few student activists do like to praise the revolutionary deeds of Castro and Mao Tse-tung. There are several aspects to this admiration, and one should put them in perspective and not simply write off these students.

Though most student offspring of thirties' radicals are wary of Communism, a few gravitate toward a doctrinaire left position, and for them Mao and Castro are the ideological replacements for Lenin and Stalin. Some do not love Castro and Mao as much as they detest Batista and Chiang Kai-shek. Behind their praise lies a critique of American society; an intuition that perhaps America has played an underhanded game in its treatment of the Cuban and Chinese Revolutions; that democratic ideals too often do not seem to extend beyond the borders of the U.S. if that far.

Another factor is that extolling of Castro and Mao, in the minds of a few, confers special avant-garde status that goes along with being tuned into the most far-out, especially if banned, films and the newest and most unconventional poetry. Castro's bearded revolutionary swagger with its touch of the *bandito,* Mao's militant anti-bourgeois posture and championing of underdog countries make these figures into culture heroes that conjure up a sense of the forbidden, the experimental, the provocative.

Finally, nearly all radicals are fascinated to some degree with two men who—whether for better or worse—have so completely transformed their societies.

VI

Nothing is gained from regarding the Berkeley uprising as a Freudian clash of sons against the fathers, as some commentators (fathers) have suggested. There is, of course, a sense in which the events at Berkeley involve a battle between generations. Students against administrators obviously means youth against its elders. Generational conflict, however, is so ancient and archetypal a social mechanism—certainly it functions in almost every revolution, political or artistic—that it affords little insight into the campus turmoil. It is far more important to realize that the revolt was the latest and most explicit confrontation at Berkeley between two antagonistic political styles.

Let us look at the Berkeley administrator's style as viewed by the students. From the time they began trying to negotiate the administra-

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tion ban on politics, students came up against constant buck-passing of responsibility for decisions. They were shuttled back and forth between a battery of deans and obscure committees. What the students found behind all this were not corrupt villains who wished them ill, but rather nervous modern liberals dressed out as bureaucrats.

To many students, there is something ineffectual and a little slippery about the new liberal-bureaucrat with his tools of mediation and compromise. He reminds them too closely of Peter Sellers playing the U.S. President in *Dr. Strangelove,* who tries unsuccessfully to juggle forces in a society gone mad; or of Major Major Major, the squadron commander in *Catch-22,* who signs his daily allotment of papers but leaps out his office window whenever anyone shows up with a problem.

Furthermore, the more militant students regard modern liberalism as a whole with something less than pleasure. They feel it is somehow implicated, if only by default, in the heritage of nightmares that compose recent history: Auschwitz, Hiroshima, the Cold War, McCarthy. They consider liberalism far too cumbersome an instrument for altering evils like the nuclear stalemate, U.S. support for tyrannical rule in foreign lands, the exclusion of the Negro from his fair share of society's rewards.

The Berkeley student activist has fashioned a style of political action out of materials borrowed from the South in order to make himself a gadfly in the hide of the local liberal Establishment. When all else fails, he resorts to impoliteness. He refuses to go through proper channels when they lead nowhere and turns his back on the decorum of committees when all the real issues have already been quietly tabled. Impoliteness, politicized, is civil disobedience.

The experience of these students is that it takes radical action on their part to get the liberals in motion. Last spring a huge number of Berkeley and other northern California college students helped stage sit-ins in a fight for equal employment opportunities for Negroes at a major hotel and several automobile dealers in San Francisco. Eventually agreements were hammered out between the Hotel Owners' Association, the auto dealers, a commission appointed by San Francisco's liberal Mayor John Shelley, and NAACP and CORE. Meanwhile, several hundred students had been arrested; many ended up paying fines and being put on probation. But they considered the outcome their victory. Similarly, 814 FSM suporters were carted off to jail before Berkeley's mostly liberal faculty came out in force to affirm the movement's goals.

VII

Students at Berkeley say that incredible changes have occurred on

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campus as a result of the struggle, which the FSM for the moment appears to have won. Everyone speaks of an authentic, campus-wide feeling of community in the air; of professors and students greeting each other by first names; of innumerable plans cropping up to give students more control over course content and professors over student discipline; of traditional divisions between campus cliques—bohemians, "dormies," even fraternity and sorority types—having been bridged. Will this state of affairs endure? Or are the victors only basking in the warm afterglow of revolutionary solidarity?

John R. Seeley

DISPATCHES FROM KIEV

KIEV, 24 November 1964. (AUP) Peace descended again this morning on the campus of the University of Kiev following a night of all-out battle between students and the constituted authorities. The events of the night reached a climax when masses of students were dragged by armed reserves, specially summoned for the occasion, from a building which, it was announced, they had illegally invested.

The story is still incomplete. Foreign tourists who happened to be visiting the University at the time of the disturbance were ejected from the building, whose windows were then papered over so that the process of "removing" the students was carefully screened from non-official view. Enough premeditated brutality had already occurred, however, to let these Western observers imagine the rest.

The students, evidently wrongly impressed with the vision and methods of Ghandi, counterposed only limp bodies to the action of the state authorities. This was officially regarded as offering an additional affront to the "Soviet way of doing things"; it infuriated the militiamen who tramped on students' legs, slapped "impudently offered faces," twisted arms, and, it is said, threw some students downstairs, and dragged others down with heads bumping from stone step to stone step. Those students who did not voluntarily walk to the specially organized arrest-center (it was announced this morning) have been additionally charged with "resisting arrest," a most serious charge in the Soviet Union. (Exception will

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be made for a number of students so young that their cases are reserved for the *Kiev Court for Children and Family Cases.*)

The operation was ordered by and carried out under the control of the chairman of the Kiev regional Soviet, Mr. Mikhail Stolpin, who is "ex officio" one of the members of the academic board at the University of Kiev—evidently in his capacity as regional governor rather than board member, since he defined the issue as one of "demonstrating that Soviet law will be upheld in this province and illegal and counter-revolutionary activities dealt with in exemplary fashion." Forces employed were solely those of the province. (The University also has forces of its own, the "People's Guard" group who appear on ordinary University occasions complete with uniforms, small-arms and ammunition, but they were not required last night.)

Indeed, the University authority's role appears to have been limited. Before the arrests, the Rector issued a *pro forma* legal warning which, according to Soviet authorities, gives a proper, legal base for the subsequent charges of trespassing. Afterwards, the head of the Ukrainian Ministry of Higher Education—the supreme executive authority over the province's system of higher education—observed drily "Students will see what it is to throw themselves on the mercy of the state authority and state courts."

This remark evidently referred to one of the issues, as the students interpreted it. They had claimed that students in the Soviet Union should be subject with regard to political action only to Soviet law and Soviet courts, and not also to University disciplinary action based on non-objective law and informal judicial processes. They had also appealed, unsuccessfully, to Article 125 of the Soviet Constitution to justify their disobedience of what they said was "unsocialistic and Stalinist-type regulation." (Article 125 guarantees all Soviet citizens "freedom of street processions and demonstrations.")

This appeal was regarded as an additional offense. Said today's edition of *Pravda of the Ukraine*:

> We must not be taken in by the merely verbal claims of those seeking to destroy our Soviet institutions by "appeals" intended solely to further disturbances. Such counter-revolutionary activity is intolerable. The bulk of the students at Kiev are not involved or interested in these trumped-up issues: they are only the dupes and camp-followers of a determined and noisy element of parasites, who pose as dissident and self-appointed "leaders."
>
> Many of these "leaders" have shown pro-Western sympathies, and some have associated with Westerners. Many have attended so-called

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"study-groups." Some, who have been carefully observed for a long time, are known as anti-Soviet in outlook.

Vladimir Semichastny, Chief of the K.G.B., warned some months ago that increased criminal and subversive influences would make themselves felt on campus as the western powers sought to make trouble in the socialist countries, in order to divert attention from deepening difficulties at home. Journalistic jackals in Wall Street are expected to distort the troubles at Kiev last night into a question of "freedom" in U.S.S.R. academic life.

All authorities asserted this morning that self-evidently no such problem exists. The Universities are, as at present constituted, the people's Universities, governed under public law in the interests of all correctly oriented Soviet students. The enormous extension of plant and capacity undertaken under the current seven-year plan, and the irresistible migration of students to our Universities prove their essential soundness.

What is shocking is that such manifestations of bourgeois, muddled thought, and individualistic and personalistic action could have taken place in an advanced group to whom so much has been given. The people's courts will know how to make the sanctions correspondingly severe.

KIEV, December 17, 1964. (AUP). The following from *Pravda, Ukraine* continues from 24 November. More to follow re court dispositions, penalties, when available:

KIEV, December 15, 1964. (Tass).

Unrest continues at the University of Kriev even following the arrest and arraignment last month of nearly eight hundred students and sympathizers on very serious anti-state charges.

The "faculty"—the instructors meeting collectively supposedly only for consultative purposes on appropriate matters—has recommended that student discipline be administered by a sub-committee of its Central Committee, instead of by the Rector and duly delegated officers. The comrades of the Academic Board have properly rejected this demand as counter-legal, since "the authority of the people resides solely in the Academic Board itself."

The Board members, continuing their program of destalinization, however, went as far as could be expected under proper socialist norms, to modify, or rather explicate, the necessary regulations. While retaining "reserve powers," given them under Soviet law and the law of the province, they declared "These will be applied only conformably to the Soviet constitution and in the socialistic spirit. There can thus be *in principle* no conflict between Marxist-Leninist aims and any actions we might take under these powers."

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The same Soviet of Instructors had previously weakened the position of the Academic Board by publishing a statement, hastily developed at the hight of the crisis, apparently taking the students' statement of issues at face value, and further (while regretting their methods) appearing to support their mistaken, idealistic and ahistorical reasoning. The Board's action stemmed, however, from the unfolding of their own dialectical role in the historical process. Said the Chairman: "The new regulations are actually the old rules, derived directly from Leninist principles, appropriately reformulated for the historical moment, and taking into account the proper social-strategic considerations."

The whole matter is receiving a great deal of study in various centers, since some have allowed it to call into question Marxist-Leninist doctrine and inviolable Party policy. Some "sociologists" (recently returned from Poland) have come to conclusions which they are not unwilling to give to the people.

Says one, with penetrating dialectical reasoning:

> The students in their subjectivity, and guided by a species of bourgeois direct-perspectivism, mistook their real enemy. The saboteurs, at Kiev and other Universities, are the professors. These, rather than confess their errors, sought to hide their subversion behind the smokescreen of "socialist criticism" of the administration. Acting with petty bourgeois motives on the basis of marginal incrementalism, personalism, careerism, bureaucratism, honorism and the cult of personality, they have, it appears, engaged in state-aided and state-sponsored "researches." Appearing to be occupied with these self-styled "duties," they have clearly evaded the necessity to pay *all* the attention they have to the instruction and supervision of the Soviet youth entrusted to them by the same State. This is objective sabotage. The neglected students become a new proletariat, alienated from the productive processes of learning. For want of proper Marxian instruction, the students' resentment then directed itself upon the governing authorities of their own (People's) University. Correct identification of the enemy will set things right, and further steps, under Party vigilance, may be left to the naturally associated students and administration.

Said another, with properly orthodox concern for social solidarity:

> The worst consequence has been the subjective division of the socialist University into false strata or partitions of so-called "students," "faculty" and "administration," and within these into factions, cliques, splinter-groups and foci of deviation. The action of a few students has created a false air of struggle in which political epithets and propaganda are employed. When, in place of a disciplined work-force, we have individuals, and when in place of celebrations of solidarity we have mut-

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> terings of "Trotskyite," "Menschevik," "administration time-server," "students' dupe," "Stakhanovite" (in a derogatory sense) and the like, it is time to talk of purges and new brooms.

Another observer, despite a certain psychologism and situationalism derived from contacts with certain Western circles and ideologies, makes some interesting observations. He points to the unusual atmospheric temperature (16° C.) at the time of the ill-considered outbreak. He also points to "the vice of the students' virtues": a great many had in the previous summer been vitally engaged in the Conquest of the Virgin Lands program, and had now returned to a situation where, lacking the resistant wilderness "there was nothing for them to throw themselves against." With perhaps a strained effort he also assimilates the students' objectively criminal activity to the decadent practices of Western University students, such as "rags" (collective joking) and "panty-raids" (endeavors by male students to secure the underwear of females).

Whatever mitigatory impact such "explanations" might be thought to have, they neither bear on guilt nor remedy. Proper order must be restored, with all parties restricted to their proper spheres.

We do not wish to see in Soviet society the kind of so-called University not uncommon in the capitalist-imperialist states where "debate" is thought to constitute a positive good and no official limits are recognized with respect either to manner or matter. In their case, since such debate serves to sharpen the internal contradictions of their system, they are welcome to it. In a developed socialist society it has no application.

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Tom Kahn and Bayard Rustin

THE AMBIGUOUS LEGACY OF MALCOLM X

Now that he is dead, we must resist the temptation to idealize Malcolm X, to elevate charisma to greatness.

His voice and words were cathartic, channeling into militant verbiage emotions that might otherwise have run a violently self-destructive course. But having described the evil, he had no program for uprooting it. With skill and feeling he articulated angry subterranean moods more widespread than any of us like to admit. But having blown the trumpet, he could summon, even at the very end, only a handful of followers . . .

His death is deeply felt among Negroes because Malcolm was a child of the ghetto. The ambivalent, the ironic and the tragic—all of which he symbolized—are the governing elements in our common experience here. So much of the debate underway in the Negro movement today reflects not merely conflicting group philosophies but the internal crisis of identity, which takes its toll of every black man in America.

From the depravity of his early years Malcolm could be extricated only by an all-embracing totality, by an intensely apocalyptic vision which would leave a void in no part of his life. Like a pendulum, he swung from one extreme to its opposite—from pimping, thieving, and dope-peddling to the renunciation of smoking, liquor, and all frivolity. A sad fact about the American scene is that only the civil rights movement comes near providing a rational, meaningful alternative to the void. Yet all too much in the larger society militates against the rational.

What can surpass the vulgar hypocrisy of the white newspapers which condemned Malcolm for his ugly remark about "chickens coming home to roost" after President Kennedy's assassination, and then decorated their own editorials with the same contemptible words after Malcolm's assassination? The dual standards persist, and, inevitably, they generate their counterparts in the Negro community.

What is terrible about Malcolm's murder is not any resemblance

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to President Kennedy's, nor is it that he who takes up the sword will perish by it, for that has not always happened. What is terrible is that the event in the Audubon Ballroom has happened before, countless times down the centuries, whenever oppressed people could not see the road to freedom because it was obscured by rhetoric and demagogery, by frustration and despair, by hopeless isolation, and perhaps by objective circumstances. And so they would turn their violence inward, on each other.

Malcolm's killing is but the most notorious and shocking example of a pattern stamped on ghetto life: Negroes slashing Negroes in Harlem on a Saturday night to even the score in a card-game, to avenge a passing insult, or for reasons so trivial as to inspire a degraded mockery. But in all of this there is an agonizing and desperate pursuit of manhood, or its image, that transcends the very value of life and survival.

"It's only the niggers cutting each other up," the white cops would say when violence broke out in the ghetto. Do Negroes concur in this definition of their worth, or has their manhood been rendered so fragile by the total society that they dare not endure the slightest assault on it from a *peer,* lest they lose it irrevocably?

More, of course, was involved in Malcolm's assassination than the ingredients of a street fight. Yet there is a continuity. It appears that all of the protagonists in the event were "lower class" Negroes engaged, probably for the first time in their lives, in a series of power plays which offered a larger arena for the achievement of status and position than any available to them in the outside world. Indeed, here was an opportunity to *affect* something—if not the long-range organizational structure of the Negro community, then certainly one of the currents within it. No one familiar with the less savory aspects of Negro church life—or for that matter, with the internal struggles in other minority institutions—will fail to understand the ferocity with which power and recognition are sought by egos otherwise deprived. The indisputable fact is that the kind of people caught up in the maelstrom of factions and grouplets revolving around Malcolm and his antagonists have little chance of making it anywhere else.

Malcolm strove to retrieve the Negro's shattered manhood from the wreckage of slavery, from the debris of matriarchy and family instability, from poverty and narcotics, from conditioned aimlessness, self-hatred and chaos. He could not succeed because these are not problems that can be exorcized by religious mysticism or denunciatory rhetoric What is required is a strategy for social change, and Malcolm was not

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willing (except perhaps when it was too late) to abandon premises which had made him and his program a maze of contradictions.

For all of his militance, Malcolm was in many respects a conservative force in the Negro community. His violent rhetoric was a "cop-out." It was not essentially different from what one hears in Harlem bars after midnight. Non-violence is denounced as incompatible with manhood and dignity, though the violence is purely verbal. And violence is intuitively recognized, if not in language then in deeds, as impracticable. The only alternative is passivity, and it is found not only among the Negro "lumpen proletariat" but among affluent sections of the black bourgeoisie whose egos are excessively bound up with property and a phoney dignity that is gravely offended when "an important representative of the race like Dr. King just *stands* there and lets some trashy white sheriff poke a finger in his face." It is not proposed that Dr. King strike the sheriff, but that he go home so that our collective dignities will be spared further embarrassment. Malcolm's appeal to inert and insulated segments of the black bourgeoisie should not be underestimated. His conception of manhood and dignity—at least during his career with the Black Muslims—was thoroughly petty bourgeois.

And his ethical Calvinism was of a piece with his economics, for Malcolm was the most compelling advocate in decades for the resurrection of Booker T. Washington's brand of self-help. Just as Washington called upon Negroes to acquire handicraft and agricultural skills at a time when industrialization was rendering these obsolete, so Malcolm primed the same ancient fantasies, advocating that Negroes pool their resources into small business establishments at a time when these are declining under the pressures of big business. If Washington failed to grasp the significance of industrialization and urbanization at the end of the last century, Malcolm refused to understand the radical changes the current technological revolution is creating in the structure of the national economy.

The parallel between these two men runs farther. In their economic fantasies, both in effect withdrew from the struggle for political equality and for integration, yet both were feted, though in different ways, by the white world. (Malcolm spoke at every major white college, but only at one or two Negro schools.) If, as was so often charged, Washington was appointed *the* Negro leader by white philanthropists, certainly Malcolm's public image was largely the creation of the white press, which grossly exaggerated his actual strength.

What need did the white press have for Malcolm? Public opponents

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of Malcolm often stated that, despite their differences with him, they were glad he was around—because he frightened white folks. It is probably true that in the public mind, the militance of SNCC and CORE faded, by comparison with Malcolm, from extremism to mainstreamism. Which was all to the good. But whom did Malcolm really frighten? Surely not Goldwater or Eastland or the racist power structure. Malcolm frightened and worried white liberals, those most in sympathy with the movement but troubled by guilt-feelings. And while all the Civil Rights groups began perceiving the need for a more fundamental movement that would encompass and activate broader sections of the Negro community, many hostile or indifferent whites were let off the hook. It was a relief for them to know that extremism existed on both sides, and that the false equation could be made between Eastland and Malcolm X.

And what of the whites who were attracted to Malcolm? Aside from certain sectarian groups on the Ultra-Left who saw Malcolm as the personification of a stage in the unfolding of their own political logic, there were guilt-ridden liberals who subjected themselves to Malcolm's speeches as a kind of initiation rite, who sought admission to a black brotherhood as an escape from sterility, who felt there was a price to be paid and that it *could* be paid. As a matter of practical politics, one may ask whether the kind of white people who will masochistically sit for hours hearing "white devils" denounced really make the sturdiest allies in the fight for freedom.

Malcolm X was a child of the ghetto and he was dedicated to the preservation of the ghetto, which he thought could be either transformed from within or transplanted to a happier environment. That was his central error, and he cannot be easily forgiven it. Every prostitute or dope addict he and the Muslims claimed to reform, the ghetto replaced many times over. The moral transformation he advocated could never take place, because there is a limit to what the will can alone achieve. Every Negro, however far he wanders, carries a piece of the ghetto with him; it is his burden and his sustenance. But the movement we build, while deriving from the ghetto, must be dedicated to its destruction.

There is evidence that toward the end Malcolm was seeking a new role for himself, that his theological (for lack of a better word) views were changing, that his hostility to whites was becoming less absolute, and that he was turning his attention to the possibilities of political action. What *kind* of political action is uncertain. Harlem life and politics being what they are, a political career for Malcolm was not inconceivable. If further advancement in the hierarchy of the Black Muslims

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was barred, as seems likely, and if Malcolm recognized that his talents were too great to be squandered on a myriad of tiny nationalist sects, as also seems likely—then the construction of a political power base might well have been the only alternative. To succeed, a modification in his racial dogma would have been required.

All of this is, of course, speculation. Malcolm's life was cut off in the midst of a personal crisis. We shall never know how he would have resolved it. If only he had cast his lot with the civil rights revolution! We could have profited mightily from his talents, now so wastefully silenced.

As for the moods Malcolm X articulated, they remain; deprived of the outlet he gave them, perhaps they will become more destructive. Malcolm X-ism will persist as a brooding, angry alienation punctured more or less frequently by shootings, bombings, and street violence. (Who can say that the visible eruptions are more damaging than the ongoing assaults on the spirit?)

The total society wanted Malcolm to break with violence, but there has to be a break on the other side, away from business as usual. At this writing, each day's newspaper brings fresh reports of atrocities from Selma. Even assuming that decisive federal action is forthcoming, what of the present emotions being generated in ghettos throughout the country? What will it take to dissipate them?

The problem in Selma is less difficult than the problem of Harlem, less complex than the conditions that produced Malcolm X-ism. The guarantee of voting rights is of crucial importance. It is the necessary first step toward realizing the Negro's potential political power. But there must be more steps, and they must lead to a massive program of national reconstruction. We have got to eliminate, not push back, the slums; to revolutionize our educational institutions; to create new jobs in the servicing of human needs. We need to reallocate the nation's enormous resources to achieve these ends.

Unless we are prepared to do this—not haphazardly and piecemeal, but under a comprehensive national plan and timetable—nothing will change. The underclass for which Malcolm spoke will always be with us, growing in desperation.

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Stanley Diamond

THE APOSTATE MUSLIM

The murder of Malcolm X cannot be reduced to an incident in an underworld conflict over material loot or social spoils. The sophisticated and intelligent ex-con who had been rebaptized Malcolm X by the Black Muslims, was publicly killed for ideological reasons, that is, he was assassinated. This culturally symbolic murder of the apostate apostle reverberates throughout American Negro society, bemuses the whites, and is viewed abroad, particularly in Africa and Asia, as another spectacular example of the American habit of self defeat. Why does the death of Malcolm thrust the issue of the Negro, like a lance, into the American body-politic?

First, it is necessary to understand the Black Muslims, not as racketeers, but as revivalists who readily become racketeers when their programs prove socially absurd. Revivalism, nativism, messianism, are generic expressions of the American Negro community. Christian revivalism, often oddly combined with African elements, is a familiar American Negro activity. Fundamentalist congregations, idiosyncratically splintered, sometimes ritualistically repressive, sometimes ritually expressive of the holy and profane passions of a crucified people, helped keep American Negroes alive.

No segment of our society has been closer to an understanding of evil, that is, to the sense of being seduced by an uncontrollable other; has so thoroughly explored the meaning of salvation, nor so realistically read the signs and symbols that identify the social maze in which we wander. Any colored kid of twelve has a tougher sense of how it is with us than many a white academic type of fifty, whether technically in or out of the Academy. To be a Negro in America, to be an *ex-slave,* even if now a new bourgeois, is to see society as tactic, to laugh up the sleeve, to put on the front when necessary, but to know where it is, to know the score, to know the domestic habits of the *master.* The only cure for this inevitable disease in a society that celebrates statuses instead of men

NOTE: This article is also appearing in *Noetics.* It appears here with some modifications by the author.

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(and it is not a true cure but a nostrum) has been the many forms of religious revivalism, those bizarre efforts at transcendence that we patronize or laugh at, from the slowed down jazz beat of the spirituals to the wonderful peace of Father Divine. So as a revivalistic movement, the Muslims are not new, not to the Negroes.

But Christian revivalism was incomplete, too much had been borrowed from the immediate white environment which, moreover, rejected the Christian message of fraternity. Christian revivalism was expressive but insufficiently disciplined and inadequately symbolic for an increasingly disorganized people. It produced its tin-horn messiahs, who became confidence men in no time at all; and it was an air-plant; it had no strong nativistic root.

But the Black Muslim movement is as close to a full-dress nativism as people without pasts can generate. Unless we see it that way we do not see it at all. The nativism, the messianism, which link the Muslims as a social species to the Plain's Indian Ghost Dance religion, the South African Bantu prophets, the Cargo Cults of New Guinea, the Iroquois Handsome Lake cult, can be broadly defined as a logical *reversal* of the usual course of assimilation, since assimilation in such situations is accurately conceived as the emasculation of the social and personal integrity of the members of the lesser by the more powerful group. When a people goes nativistic, its energies turn inwards; it gives up the impossible effort to unite with the conqueror (may, indeed, try to become a conqueror); it cries out in defense of what it can rescue, invent, rationalize, or mobilize of its own culture. But that cry is also one of agony; it is the sound of a people dying to the world as it exists and it is in this sense, above all, that nativistic movements rising within or on the margins of the expanding West, are descendants of Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. For in each of these original instances, there was also a turning away from the world, a denial of mundane problems, a scourging and etherialization of conscience by *prophets* and, on the other hand, the contrapuntal erection of a worldly establishment, sanctifying power and even pleasure by the *priests.*

It must not surprise us to find this same tension in the descendant little movements, no matter how grotesquely resonated. They are means of resolving adversity, although they cannot be reduced to that function. When an immoral magazine like *Time* chatters piously about the sexual tastes, personal crimes, and peculation of Black Muslims, or of Malcolm, we should always bear in mind the grand example of the Renaissance clergy, the business activities of modern church and ancient temple, the Pharisees, the youth of how many saints, and the question-

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able or false prophets who have graced the major religions. The religious establishments have always taken good care of themselves and they have always held out the gaunt hand of charity to the laity; the Black Muslims crudely show us how. But this philistine form of churchly corruption is always shallow. It is the corruption of the spirit that interests us, the Passion not according to the Hierarchy, but to such a one as Kazantzakis, wherein the temptations and weaknesses of Jesus are explored to their most excruciating point and wherein every degradation that we are heir to is experienced as a prelude to transcendence. Here, too, we find a dwarfed reflection of the larger in the smaller, of the ancestral in the descendant messianisms.

Now let's examine more specifically how the Black Muslims, as a member of the species, logically reverse the blocked, typically persistent thrust towards assimilation. First of all, a new social myth of the Negro past is invented or, to put the matter more precisely, Negro settlement in the United States is regarded as a negative diaspora, in much the classic Zionist sense, and the center of historical gravity is conceived as Africa; but even Africa, ravished by the whites, is relatively impotent, so Muslim Africa, facing Mecca, becomes the source of spiritual pride. The symbols white-Christian-European are blotted out, and Black-Muslim-Afro-Asian are substituted. The personal names of members of the Movement are shifted from those bestowed in slavery to either Islamic names, apparently for those who have made the pilgrimage, or the given name is maintained and the surname reduced to X, symptomatic of a degraded and anonymous patrimony.

There is also a reversal of racism. Caucasians are regarded as inferior; there is even a myth of racial origin to account for it. Correlatively, the idea of integration is regarded as contaminating of the Negro, and a purely formal demand for a self-governing tract of land for Negro resettlement is made.

There is a logical reversal of the locus of responsibility for the Negro condition. Although the whites are considered guilty forever and damned for their crimes against the Negroes, only the Negroes can emancipate and regenerate themselves. Only the Negroes have *that* power, here the whites are impotent. Whites are barred from the movement and cooperation with white agencies is forbidden, although all public facilities are used. It is conceived that only the Negroes can reformulate a Negro personal and social identity which is held to be degenerate. From this self-hatred arises yet another logical reversal—the manifest Puritanism of the movement, forced like sweet milk from the body of Negro amorality. The historically violated Negro woman is considered

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sacrosanct; she is secluded and protected, and her formal dress, at least, is designed to cover rather than display her sex.

Similarly pursuing the Islamic model, which is so usefully antithetical to the American Negro past, drinking, smoking, and, of course, the habit of drugs are forbidden. This Puritanism also has the effect, at least in abstract, of reversing the roles of the sexes. The men, conceived to be on the road to rehabilitation, regain their positions as heads of families. The intention, if not the result, is to obliterate the more or less typical husbandless, fatherless, mother-centered lower-class Negro family, that minimal rung on the rope ladder of Negro society. Within the movement, men are supposed to find psychological 'security,' and it is expected, in return, that they will find steady jobs so as to make both their families and the movement viable. Therefore, many Negro women, dreadfully burdened for generations with the basic responsibilities of sheer survival, look with favor on the movement. These sometime wives, grieving mothers, and thwarted lovers want men whom they can respect, and who will respect them.

Another effort to cauterize the wound of slavery, to embrace the alienation of the Negro from American life, and thus to reverse the process of assimilation is the doctrine of militant self-defense. This is not only a denial of the power and good intentions of the polity at large, the white police state, but also reverses the passive aggressive character of Negro social response, with its collectively non-violent, symbolic, evasive patterns of resistance. A disciplined troops supposedly replaces the random, opportunistic violence, and the patterned evasions with which Negroes customarily confront whites. Self-hatred, self-regeneration, self-defense compose a logically and historically derived progression, common to all nativistic movements, in the effort to achieve social and personal identity. The Black Muslims, with little loss in meaning, and some increase in irony, might as well be called Black Zionists.

At the pinnacle of the movement stands the *Prophet,* the underwriter of the chosen people's divine fate, reader of signs, and, simultaneously, disbursing favors, as his own chief *priest,* since the immediacy and novelty of the movement do not permit the separate, if linked, growth of faith and church. The Prophet is the movement incarnate, the voice of its inevitability, the recreator of its past, the interpreter of the future, the scourge of its enemies, the holy avenger, the source of spiritual good, which is black; the leader into the promised land. In the person of the Prophet, the climactic reversal occurs; Caliban and Prospero exchange roles, and the notion of the *white* devil takes its logical place alongside the black and yellow devils.

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Surrounding the Prophet are the disciples, an elite within an elite movement, which is, in itself, the ordained instrument of a superior people. In all such movements, whether historical or contemporary, the original nucleus of the faith is small. Its significance is to be measured, not in formal allegiance but in what the movement symbolizes to the people at large, in whose name it functions, and in how faithfully it represents the world as experienced by them. For this reason, the defection of Malcolm X was more than a schism that could be contained within the ranks. It was heresy. The heresy lay in Malcolm's cast of mind, and in his capacity to grow, to change his mind. When that became clear, this tough and charismatic man who drifted through the Negro landscape over ground so familiar to them and "shocking" to us, either had to be controlled or done away with. The details are of no importance, but it should be noted that Malcolm was not killed, although he *had* been threatened, until he had begun to change his attitude toward the enemy. A Muslim in the traditional sense he became and remained, but he was ceasing to be a nativist, and was becoming a universalist. That could only have been the ultimate secular heresy in the view of the Black Muslims. Malcolm had graduated from a sect to a great tradition and at one stroke thereby revealed the distinction between Islam and the Black Muslims, while in his traffic with the black and white enemy, he had begun to explore solutions beyond cultism. Malcolm was obsessed with the Negro condition, with the Negro being, with being a Negro, but he was not compulsively restricted to a single pseudo-solution. His real religious faith would seem to have matured when he felt free to experiment with other answers.

At that juncture he had to be executed, because to the degree that Malcolm won his identity, the Black Muslims lost theirs. This man of inbetween color who rose out of the Negro world, our underworld, to confront us could have been born out of the head of Genet. We dare not disown him for we are his creation and he is ours. We need him to understand ourselves; his mere existence publicly illuminated Negroes in a way that drove the liberals back to respectability. And do his life and death not reveal how obtuse white Americans are in failing to see that all they have to do to pull the sting of the Negro as Negro is to accept him, without socio-economic reservations, into our lives. The real problem that will then emerge, is now emerging, is not one of color but of a self-divisive, mutually created cultural being. And even that can be transcended, if we are willing to plunge into the depths out of which Malcolm was rising. But first we must learn to swim, white fish in his, in our dark sea, learning what he learned of us.

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Jeremy Larner

McCOMB VS. HARLEM

A Matter of Identity

> *. . . a man's advantage,* sometimes *not only may, but even must, consist in his desiring in certain cases what is harmful to himself and not advantageous . . . . what man wants is simply independent choice, whatever that independence may cost and wherever it may lead. . . . He will launch a curse upon the world, and as only man can curse (it is his privilege, the primary distinction between him and other animals), it may be by his curse alone he will attain his object—that is, convince himself that he is a man and not a piano-key!*
>
> —DOSTOEVSKY, *Notes from Underground*

Over the '64 Christmas holidays, 37 Negro high school students from McComb, Mississippi, were brought to New York by private funds raised by two COFO volunteers who had spent the summer teaching in the McComb "Freedom School." The McComb kids received a rude shock in New York. Their Harlem counterparts—the small group of teenage Negroes active in civil rights organizations—taunted them, brutally derided them, accused them of cowardice and called them "Toms" because they believed in non-violence. As one girl, Eula Lee, later wrote: "I had heard the bombs and rifle shots of McComb, Mississippi, and seen the crosses burn in front of churches and homes, but never before had I seen such an open attack as the one from Harlem."

On their fifth night in New York, the McComb kids met with kids from Harlem's HARYOU.* Reportedly the uproar broke out when Thelma Eubanks from McComb asked how come, when Negroes in Mississippi give up their lives trying to vote, most Harlem people don't even bother to register? Her question provoked a torrent of abuse, and

* At the time of the McComb visit, HARYOU and ACT—two youth employment community organizations—had recently merged into HARYOU-ACT to receive a federal grant, but still maintained separate offices.

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the McComb kids were still reeling when I joined them the next morning at the U.N., where they were to meet Ralph Bunche. Reeling, but not toppled. The youngsters had a kind of slow steadiness to them. They had been assaulted before, I gathered, and kept their feelings deeply stored.

When COFO came to McComb, these kids were warned by black and white alike to stay away from the Freedom House. The Negro teachers of their all-black high school ridiculed them and assigned them extra homework. And many had to defy their own parents to participate in COFO activties. "The people of McComb should wake up and realize that the young people are going to move ahead with or without their help," Billy Givens wrote last summer in *Freedom's Journal,* the McComb Freedom House newspaper. Givens and about half of the other kids who came to New York had worked on the McComb voter registration drive, helped organize protest rallies, and canvassed for social and economic surveys. Once the Civil Rights Bill passed, they engaged in sit-ins to integrate local facilities. Finally—without benefit of COFO help—they went back to school this fall and organized a successful boycott against the rule prohibiting lunches brought from home or bought in any place other than the school cafeteria.

They do not delude themselves that their victories are anything but partial; yet they share a sense of lines crossed, important beginnings. (Their trip itself seemed an example of promise.) They discover themselves thinking and acting in ways which for their parents would have been suicidal. If nothing else, the white response in McComb tells them that the order of the South has been shaken. "These Harlem students have a spirit of hopelessness," Eula Lee told Bunche. "But we're going to fight until we win."

Of course they are not innocent about the distribution of power in Mississippi; they know the chances they're taking. One of them is Herbert Lea, Jr., whose father was murdered for trying to organize his people. In Pike County there have been 37 bombings since June. Yet one of the girls said, "If our homes must be bombed, let them be bombed because we participated, and not because we were neutral."

Nor did the kids from McComb come to Harlem without appreciation of the differences they would find. Writing on the Harlem riots in *Freedom's Journal* last summer, editor Thelma Eubanks said,

> They are expressing their feelings by rioting . . . . they feel they weren't achieving anything by being non-violent. They are still rioting. . . . What will be the results? . . . Are they gaining anything by it?

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What shocked Thelma and her friends was to find that even to raise such questions of strategy was to convict oneself of treason in the eyes of their new acquaintances. As Eula Lee wrote:

> It was a confusing situation. . . . Did I want to go back to Harlem? Did I want to face the the accusing stares and be called a white man's fool? Guilty of playing his game?

Eula was upset: "Such hatred and violence would have been unspeakable for a Negro in Mississippi. And then you ask yourself, are they wrong to hate? To fight back?"

After talking with Bunche, the kids stayed on in a U.N. conference room to discuss the events of the night before. Their New York guide and discussion leader was Ira Landess, a young man who teaches English at one of the "problem" high schools in New York. During the summer in McComb, Landess had worked at the Freedom School, teaching English and Negro history (others taught math, French, biology, chemistry, art and typing; Mario Savio of Berkeley taught Spanish). The discussion method was Socratic: Landess wanted the kids to let loose their reactions, to know them and test them.

He didn't have to probe for long; the kids were still smarting. A girl had said, "You're doing just what Mr. Charlie wants you to do—lie down and get beaten!" And a "militant" young man had insisted that if they were really "serious," the McComb kids should "do like us. Get up to the roofs and drop a garbage can on their heads!"

"Well, what about that?" prodded Landess.

"Throwing garbage cans is just what Mr. Charlie wants us to do," argued one McComb girl. "Because violence is one of the white man's traits—and we want to turn away from being like them. They think we're jungle savages anyway."

> LANDESS: "Let's get it to the point of war. If there's a war, who's gonna win?"
> 1ST BOY: "The power structure. Garbage cans can't stand up against guns."
> 2ND BOY: "The power structure doesn't have any more guns than the Negroes." [*From the others: groans*]
> 1ST BOY: "Look at down in McComb. The cops have machine guns, gas bombs, power hoses. How can you combat that?"
> 2ND BOY: "You could start something and then they'd chicken out. . . ."
> 1ST GIRL: "What's your dead body gonna prove?"
> 2ND BOY: "You're gonna die anyway. . . ."
> Six of the others, in unison: "Why rush it?"
> 1ST GIRL: "Remember in McComb when they broke into the National Guard Armory? *Negroes* didn't get any of those guns!"
> 3RD BOY: "They didn't break in. They walked in."

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A boy who had not spoken told a story that was obviously disturbing him. One of the HARYOU boys had drawn him aside the night before. "I'll tell you what *we* do, man. We catch those rich white folks on the subway. We beat them and take their money. You oughta do that, man!"

"We're trying to do it without that, man," the McComb boy had replied.

"Hey, man, what you doing tonight? Why don't you come with us, man?"

Afterwards, the McComb boy had told Landess he never wanted to go back to HARYOU. Why not? "Because I might get in a fight." Nevertheless, Landess pressed him today. What did he think of such random violence? What did he really think?

"If innocent folks get killed, maybe we oughta do that!" the boy blurted out. "Innocent Negroes been getting killed for a long time!"

"Then you've reversed yourself!" Landess pointed out. It was as though a valve had been turned. It seemed to this observer that many of the kids admitted to themselves, for the first time, the attractiveness of killing a white man.

"That's the only way we got places in Atlanta!" another one burst out.

But Landess took them back, again and again, to the central question: "Can it win?" They knew it couldn't.

"I'd like to take 'em, put 'em in a sack, dump 'em in a river. But that won't do no good," said one boy in bitter conclusion.

II

That night the kids from McComb went down to Mobilization for Youth on the Lower East Side to present a play about Mississippi. Though the text was written by a full-time COFO worker, it left a great deal of leeway for spontaneous acting and the singing of "freedom songs" and spirituals. The audience—composed of Negro kids from the neighborhood who'd been active in MFY community programs plus HARYOU visitors—reacted enthusiastically, especially when an actor brilliantly burlesqued the quavering "Yassuh" of an Uncle Tom. The audience joined in the singing—and the best-received song was a Rock 'n' Roll number with words, music and professional guitar accompaniment by a boy from McComb named Arthur Jackson, who the next night won the amateur talent show at the Apollo.

What makes a man
Want to fight for freedom?
Maybe it's because
He understands he's a man. . . .

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The fight didn't break out till afterwards, when a panel of McComb kids entertained questions from the audience. The questions tended increasingly toward abusive pronouncements as to what "we" would do to "them." There was one claque of boys from Uptown who cheered and jived at each boast of violence, jeered and sneered whenever a white person started to speak. The hero for this claque was a tall boy in a HARYOU blazer, who got up to announce that every white in the Congo should have been put to death. When opposition developed from the MFY kids, the HARYOU boy, with a triumphant smile, repeated his credo about garbage-can warfare. His admirers applauded wildly, slapped each other's hands. He continued: "You say we should overcome, we should overcome, but we ain't come nowhere!"

Replied Thelma Eubanks: "*You* haven't come nowhere—you should come to McComb!"

Outside the Harlem boys blocked the sidewalk and heckled the McComb kids as they walked to the bus stop with white and black COFO workers. But they did no harm. One of the McComb girls told me that a Harlem boy was phoning her every night. "He doesn't talk that way when he talks to me alone. He only talks that way in a crowd. I think he feels better when he talks to me."

III

The next afternoon the kids were at ACT, to confer in small groups on specific problems and to see if they couldn't work out a joint action program which both sides could agree on. In the hall, a New York teacher introduced me to a Negro boy who was a member of an interracial social club. This earnest young man was embarrassed when I asked him how he liked the club. He wanted me to know that it was *not* his object to socialize with white girls. Nor must anyone accuse him of desiring integration. "I want neither integration nor segregation, just an equal chance!" A friend of his came by and they fell to discussing the skin-color of Africans, reassuring one another that many "pure Africans" had light skins.

Meanwhile the workshops were in session. I noticed the tall boy with the HARYOU blazer leading one group; in his hand he held a pamphlet titled "Road to Revolution," published by the Progressive Labor Movement—a Maoist group with an active office in Harlem.

When the committees reported, the general meeting was directed by a young woman in her twenties—a HARYOU-ACT worker who turned up the next day as Malcolm X's secretary. In the discussion that followed I thought I saw new signs of respect for McComb. At first the Harlem

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kids seemed sincerely to want to communicate; a few even conceded that non-violence might be an appropriate tactic in some circumstances. But not for Harlem. It won't solve *our* problems, they insisted. The McComb kids for their part were withdrawn: their experience has given them small inclination for debate.

The longer the discussion lasted, the more perceptibly order and effectiveness gave way to scorn and swagger. The COFO leaders who tried to speak were hopelessly inarticulate and confused. The trouble was that any practical ideas concerning Harlem—e.g., voter education, self-help programs, selected lobbying—involved looking ahead for a number of *years*. But the Harlem kids knew full well that they were *already* left out. In an increasingly technical society they are drastically behind in education long before they leave elementary school. Opening up a few menial jobs for dropouts does them no good; they look to the future with a feeling of aching inadequacy. Those few who are interested in politics even hysterically are braver than the many who stand hopeless in doorways. The interest is hysterical because they need something NOW—and they're not getting it. Implicit in everything they said that day was the challenge: Why should I accept more denial and restraint? I'm already ruined. Why not revenge?

One girl burst out bitterly in favor of violence, proudly flaunting her "black nationalist" convictions. She was challenged—not by McComb, but by a delegation from the MFY youth group, YAAG—to produce a program. Her answer was pure Malcolm:

> "We don't want to give our plans to the Enemy. We got some Toms in the room right here."
>
> Ten voices at once: "What's a Tom?"
>
> "A Tom is a person who's got a black skin and thinks white, or a white who thinks white. We got to act for ourselves."
>
> "What's the difference between the way a black person thinks and a white person thinks? Do we want only Negroes involved in our movement?"
>
> "You know you can't do anything with whites. Whites can only be our friends to a point. Because they can be black only to a point. Out of all the organizations in the United States, the Muslims are the only one who are all black. In order for us to get any satisfaction out of an organization it has to be in our terms. We can't compromise."

Self-destructive as this line may seem, it struck a chord in most of the young people present. Even the boys from YAAG squirmed uneasily at the accusation that whites had compromised them. Their leader felt compelled to rally them:

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"Two wrongs don't make a right! We don't believe in compromise. We're for integration 100%. Non-violence is the key, passive resistance is the key for now. Things may go slow for the next ten years. But how can you fight these people who have all the guns? I think we ought to join with these kids from McComb!"

From the back of the room, an older man interrupted:

"We have to learn politics, guerrilla warfare, make some plans for *violence*. You let a man hit you, he'll keep right on with a passion. You want to make him respect you you hit him back. You don't have the guns now—then make plans how you gonna get them! This waiting bit is crazy. What's happening now in Africa is gonna happen here in another ten years!"

. . . And the HARYOU boys shouted Right! Right! Right! The meeting fell apart, and as the kids headed for the door several young men and women pushed PLM pamphlets into their hands.

IV

When the McComb kids went to hear Malcolm the next day, these same young men and women were waiting for them and made an abortive attempt to keep out the COFO leaders. By this time the McComb kids were so battle-weary that only about half could be collected to come, and a few more slipped away as the group walked to the Hotel Theresa. Malcolm himself was most articulate—but in the manner of a publicist or a preacher rather than a political leader. He was selling a mystique rather than a plan of action.

There's some truth in Malcolm's conception of Christian submission as part and parcel of Negro slavery. Still, I thought it strange that "a militant Afro-American" must embrace the great religion of the Arabs, who in their time sold whole tribes of black Africans into slavery. But one can understand the psychology of such conversion when one sees certain young Jewish zealots at Malcolm's public speeches, grinning and nodding when he makes his anti-Semitic jokes . . . as if he and they shared some marvelous secret.

The secret is that black masses the world over are uniting in "insurrection against white o-pression." Therefore, Malcolm told the kids, they were not really members of a downtrodden minority; if they would "answer violence in its own language," "we'd have the whole world on our side!" He himself had made a trip to Africa to line up support. Proudly he invoked "leaders like Nkrumah in Ghana, Nasser in Egypt, Ben Bella in Algeria. . . ." With special awe he informed the kids that "Zanzibar has a *real* strong man!"

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To this reporter, much of what Malcolm offers—both to Harlem and to the romantic radical—was contained in his incantation of that phrase "a *real* strong man." Malcolm has no interest in democracy or in the difficult means of achieving democracy; what he offers is identity. To the Negro who in truth cannot wait ten years to begin his personal future, he says—you need not plan or bargain or squeeze, and why should you control yourself? Proclaim that you'll fight to the death: then, and only then, can you respect yourself! You too can be "a *real* strong man!" Those fake strong men, the whites, will back down before you.

The important aspect here is verbal. As Dostoevsky shrewdly tells us, "it may be by his curse alone he will . . . convince himself that he is a man and not a piano-key!" After the meeting I asked Landess—who had had some bad experiences with Mississippi whites—if he saw any similarities in attitude between rednecks and black nationalists. "No," he said. "Mississippi racists are drenched in violence, born and bred in it. They don't talk about it or think about it or justify themselves. The feeling I get in Harlem is that this talk of violence is mainly *defensive*."

Inevitably, there was one question Malcolm had to answer—even though he kept the adults in the audience from asking questions. "What is your program?" someone wanted to know. "Exactly what will you do about, say, Mississippi?" Malcolm could only hint that "brothers" were being "trained" and "organized" to retaliate "by whatever means necessary" . . . "*if* we go into Mississippi . . . *if* you ask us to come. . . ."

One wonders what Malcolm can accomplish even in Harlem, where sometimes 500 people attend his talks. That the young militants call him "Chief" seems insufficient when one considers not only that the Negroes are a 10% minority in this country but that as yet only a minority of that minority have committed themselves to civil rights activity even of the peaceful sort.

Civil rights reporter Nat Hentoff tells a relevant anecdote. It seems that when Che Guevara visited New York he was approached by young enthusiasts who asked for advice concerning guerrilla activity in the United States. Guevara began to laugh. "No, no," he protested. "I'm on your side, but . . . in *this* country? Never!"

V

And so the McComb kids journeyed home again, from the frying pan to the fire. They left still committed to non-violence and eager for their Harlem friends to return the visit next summer. Nor had Malcolm offended them: "[He] said many things that I felt but was afraid to say," wrote Eula Lee. "I had a better understanding of what it meant *to really be trapped*. . . ."

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—Which, of course, is exactly what the urban ghettoes of the North are all about. Our definite progress on the civil rights front is in ironic contrast to the lack of any significant program to create real economic democracy. Partly due to such progress, the tide of racial consciousness is swelling, and the various Negro action groups are in frantic competition to direct it. The bitter despair of the ghettoes is a force which tends to push many rights groups in the direction of racist rhetoric and defeatist gestures. ". . . What man wants is simply independent choice, whatever that independence may cost and wherever it may lead." "He will launch a curse" . . . because a curse gives "satisfaction," as the girl said.

The lesson of McComb vs. Harlem is that so many in the Movement, leaders included, passionately need that "satisfaction." In a situation that makes them so easily feel like piano-keys, they would rather lose than do without it.

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Stanley Kauffmann

LeROI JONES AND THE TRADITION OF THE FAKE

LeRoi Jones has already had more attention, more production of plays, more publication, more criticism and news comment than—at any less opportune moment—he could conceivably merit. But one aspect of his work and *persona* seems worth further analysis, hopefully as counteraction. This is his place in the Tradition of the Fake.

This tradition, to me, is one in which a writer preaches violence, revolution, anarchism—total action—against his society, while he lives and works cozily within that society and profits by the continuance of the status quo. Obviously every social critic who has ever written has had to exist on this planet, without benefit of the Archimedean dream. But many writer-revolutionaries have been prepared to substantiate their beliefs with all or part of their lives, and have done so. Some random examples: Bakunin, Emma Goldman, Ernst Toller, none of whom insured that revolutionary principle did not disturb his personal life.

In the last thirty years or so, a new tradition has grown, particularly but not exclusively in this country. In the Depression years a group of novelists and playwrights arose, proletarian in tone and careerist in intent, who preached strike, solidarity, and quasi or non quasi Communism. They appeared at protest meetings, sometimes visited Gastonia or Cuba, signed manifestoes, but were all busily bucking for the book club, Broadway, or Hollywood. Of course they made contributions to strike funds according to their means; of course they argued that their books/plays had to be read/seen in order for their message to be effective. But, to my knowledge, there were few such writers who—like the figures named above—put their money where their mouths were (as gamblers say); who put their whole lives on the line. The leftist writers who went to Spain in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were not many; and I mean successful writers—the pull on lesser-known writers to remain home was not as strong. Many of these people later suffered painfully in the McCarthy era, but they suffered precisely because they were struggling to remain within the plump precincts of Madison Avenue or Hollywood.

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The tradition has certainly flourished since the Thirties. The practitioners are easy to recognize today: the playwright who sees drugs as the only solace and inevitability in our society's mess at the same time that he marries, begets a family, lives happily without apparently raising his family on pot, let alone heroin; the professor of English who out-Spenglers Spengler in books and articles and who fulfills his job at the university, preparing students for the future while he is waiting for the end.

Now we have the unfortunately important example of LeRoi Jones, the luckiest man of our times, a writer who—unlike James Baldwin—would be less than lightly held if he did not happen to be a Negro at this moment in American history. Here are some recent Jones pronouncements (*Village Voice,* Dec. 17, 1964): "My ideas revolve around the rotting and destruction of America . . . Guerrilla warfare by blacks is inevitable in the North and South." *New York Herald Tribune,* Dec. 13, 1964: "You better learn *now,* not when someone's got his knife against your throat. That will be too late to say Yes . . ." From a report of a panel meeting in a Village night club (*New York Times,* Feb. 10, 1965):

> The audience, liberals all and most of them white, sat in a daze while LeRoi Jones, playwright, and Archie Shepp, jazz musician, both Negroes, pronounced them guity of racial injustice . . . The bearded Mr. Jones . . . made the evening as searing as one of his plays. He began with a description of "the revolutionary theater" which he said "hates whites" and was "a theater of victims." The words fascist and fascism, he declared, had been made obsolete by the words America and Americanism and he raised the vision of "20 million 'spooks' storming America." With great good humor he assured the audience that "our enemies" included "most of you who are listening."

(The masochism of white audiences *vis-à-vis* Jones is yet another subject, well explored by George Dennison in *Commentary,* February 1965.)

The remarks above are a milder version of what the Negro protagonist says in Jones's prize-winning play *Dutchman.* Here is Clay addressing the white girl who has teased him:

> Bird [Parker] would've played not a note of music if he just walked up to East Sixty-seventh Street and killed the first ten white people he saw. Not a note! And I'm the great would-be poet. Yes. That's right! Poet. Some kind of bastard literature . . . all it needs is a simple knife thrust. Just let me bleed you, you loud whore, and one poem vanished.

Apropos of these lines, here is a passage from a poem in Jones's recent collection *The Dead Lecturer:*

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A cult of death,
need of the simple striking arm under
the streetlamp. The cutters from under
their rented earth. Come up, black dada

nihilismus. Rape the white girls. Rape
their fathers. Cut the mothers' throats.

What are the facts of this fire-eater's life? He has a white wife and two daughters by her. He teaches at the New School and at Columbia. His New School course is called *American Poetry Since 1945*. The catalogue, presumably with his approval if not in his words, describes it thus: "American poetry since World War II has been the most influential and vital of world poetries." (Compare his statement in the *Village Voice*: "America is the source of Western culture . . . a culture whose time has come and which is rotting at the roots.") The catalogue continues: "The work of Robert Lowell, Robert Duncan, W. D. Snodgrass, Denise Levertov, Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Frank O'Hara, Allen Ginsberg, and many other important younger American poets is considered [in the course]..." So far as I know, every one of the poets named is white.

With most poets and playwrights it would be heavily literal and ludicrous to apply tests of pragmatism to their metaphors. It would also have small extra-literary relevance. However, in Jones's writings and pronouncements, he has so insisted on violence—at a time when such advice could easily affect others' lives—that a comparison between his *modus scribendi* and *modus vivendi* is not only illuminating but imperative. He has edited an anthology called *Four Young Lady Poets*. So far as I know, these ladies are white. When D-Day comes and the knife-thrusts happily make poems unnecessary, can we count on Jones to slit these ladies' throats? Or will he fink out? When he is given his pistol and his signal, will he do his self-declared duty and begin the slaughter with his wife and children?

In one sense it can be conjectured that he has already murdered his family. His play *The Slave* deals with a cataclysmic race war in the future. The Negro war leader visits the home of his ex-wife (white) who is re-married to a white man and who has taken the two small daughters of her first marriage to live with her. The Negro has in fact killed the two daughters before the play opens and subsequently shoots the second husband; a bomb kills the wife. The Negro survives. The dialogue of the play rehearses in synoptic form some of the arguments against Jones himself, but, here as elsewhere, knowledge of objections

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is not necessarily an answer to objections. The exchange finally comes down to what the protagonist calls the point. He says to his ex-wife: "The point is that you [whites] had your chance, darling, now these other folks [Negroes] have theirs." The arguments Jones anticipates and tries to answer are all crushed by his *summum bonum*: "Right is in the act!" The play's rhetoric and dialectic, neither of which is worth much criticism as such, explode finally in blood vengeance. One can reasonably assume, I think, that, besides anticipating arguments against his polemical position, the author has in fantasy projected a betrayal (in a moment of stress the wife calls her ex-husband "nigger"). The author's response to this fantasy betrayal is not only the death of the betrayers and the children but the virtual end of the world.

In the *New York Post,* Jan. 15, 1965, Langston Hughes suggested that performances of *The Slave* be alternated racially:

> Every other night let all the present Negro characters be played by white actors, and vice versa . . . Let a bullying *white* man kick, curse, browbeat and shoot a nice liberal *black* professor and his wife in their suburban living room . . . since some critics . . . claim that LeRoi Jones may not really be writing about color at all, but instead is concerned with no group "smaller than mankind." God help us all!

Ralph Ellison, in his review of Jones's book *Blues People* reprinted in *Shadow and Act,* not only exposes the flaws of Jones's understanding of blues and jazz but comments on the author's tone:

> . . . one gets the impression that while Jones wants to perform a crucial task which he feels *someone* should take on—as indeed someone should —he is frustrated by the restraint demanded of the critical pen and would like to pick up a club. [Later:] Jones has stumbled over that ironic obstacle which lies in the path of any who would fashion a theory of American Negro culture while ignoring the intricate network of connections which binds Negroes to the larger society. To do so is to attempt a delicate brain surgery with a switch-blade.

I shall not offend Hughes and Ellison by comparing them as authors with Jones or by underscoring that their interest in Negro freedom is at least as deep as his. But their view of Jones as social analyst emphasizes that my view is not necesarily a white one. For progress, Jones substitutes revenge. For possible fellowship, he substitutes black chauvinism. In the *Times* report quoted earlier, he referred to Michael H. Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, the white civil rights workers murdered in Mississippi, as "artifacts" and "paintings on the wall." Their color apparently made their deaths less real than that of their Negro companion, James E. Chaney.

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For those of us who see the civil rights movement as the struggle in which our whole national social and spiritual aspiration is involved, by which this country must grow or strangle, Jones is a dangerous nuisance. Bayard Rustin wrote (*Commentary,* February 1965): "Needless to say, I am assuming that the forms of political democracy exist in America, however imperfectly, that they are valued, and that elitist or putschist conceptions of exercising power are beyond the pale of discussion for the civil rights movement." One can argue only with the phrase "needless to say." Rustin is carefully planning strategy, having perceived that the Negroes' opportunity, now that the first social improvements have been achieved, is in organized political power; and while Rustin plans, Jones is providing pseudo-orgasmic thrills as distractions for energy that might otherwise be usefully employed.

Even a stalwart like A. J. Muste has been to some degree hoodwinked by Jones. In *Liberation* (February 1965) he refers to Jones's *Voice* interview and says:

> There are forms of expression used by Jones which seem to me open to question, but his basic view about America's role in the world today should be seriously considered, and comes nearer, in my opinion, to the realities of the present world situation than the point of view which prevails among Americans, including probably most Negro Americans.

This seems to me utterly foolish, and the folly is heightened, rather than modified, by Muste's later statement that "the advocacy of violence in the United States, *at least at this juncture,* is adventurist rather than revolutionary." (Italics added.)

Muste's belief in Jones's pronouncements rests on the United States commitment to containment of Communism in Asia, the disparity of living standards between whites and non-whites around the globe, and a view of Mississippi as microcosm of the long world history of colonialism and the exploitation of colored peoples. The only way one can rationally accept Muste's support of Jones on these grounds is to believe that a racially equal United States—with, let us say, a Negro President and Secretary of State—would immediately change our Vietnam policy, would wipe out domestic corruption, would embrace and be embraced by Africa. (American Negroes have already found in Africa—as whites have long known—that the same color of skin does not automatically eliminate prejudice.) But even Jones makes no such grand claims or promises. All he promises is vengeance—specified as such and as bloody as necessary or possible. It is a grievous error, I believe—and a further proof of the danger of Jones's propagandism—for an A. J. Muste to

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supply a missing foundation of purported reason under these loose demagogic utterances.

Meanwhile, the Kings, Farmers, Rustins, Randolphs labor on, trying to get Negroes registered, educated, suitably employed and paid. There are even some white "artifacts" and "paintings on the wall" helping them; and there is good reason to believe that, in some places in the South, these whites run greater physical risks than Negroes. Meanwhile Jones continues his irresponsible and increasingly successful career as a professional firebrand, disconnected from the facts of his life. Luther took his excommunication. Herzen took his exile. Jones, after writing his verses and making his speeches about rotting America, takes the bus: to the New School, where he explicates the virtues of contemporary American poetry. Perhaps, if his play about mass-murdering whites is doing well enough, he takes a taxi.

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Lewis Coser

THE BREAKUP OF THE SOVIET CAMP

The breakup of the Communist camp in the 1960s is an event of world historic importance which may well rank with such crucial turning points as the break between the Western and the Eastern Church, the Reformation, or the halting of the Islamic onslaught on Western Europe in the 8th century. Radicals seem in general to have been just as little prepared for this event as the official analysts of the Establishment. This calls for some comment.

Radicals tend in their analysis to focus attention upon dynamic factors, upon the change and flux of history, while the defenders of the *status quo* tend to think in terms of equilibria and static models. But in the face of the Soviet phenomenon, radicals, it must be admitted, have been prone till very recently to accept the static assumptions of the academic and diplomatic Establishment. This has been so with respect to internal developments within the Soviet bloc and it has been even more pronounced in regard to the relations among the nation-states of World Communism. As regards the first, many, perhaps most, radical commentators were influenced by the static models of totalitarianism which had been proposed by such thinkers as Hannah Arendt. Radicals tended to think of Russia and its satellites as societies in which all major internal social forces, be they classes, associations or communal institutions, had been eroded and undermined so that the immense tutelary power of State and Party would stand unchallenged and unchallengable over a prostrate and atomized society. The events since the death of Stalin both within Russia and within the satellites have shattered this static model and have shown its inability to do justice to the dynamics within Soviet society. I would suggest that it is now high time that the similarly static model of the relations between the various national components of World Communism be likewise consigned to the dust bin of history.

By a curious paradox both proponents and opponents of World Communism have in the past often shared a similar view of the extension of Communism on the world scene. They saw it spreading, like a

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huge inkblot, from the Russian heartland into wider and wider areas, and while they naturally disagreed on whether or how further expansion could be checked, neither seems to have been much concerned with locating the sources for internal contradictions and conflicts among the component elements of the Soviet bloc. Much as it had been assumed that totalitarianism once in power would put an effective stop to the play of antagonistic social forces within a society, so was it assumed that extension of the Soviet sway over previously independent nation-states would put a stop to the play of antagonistic national forces. It was somehow believed that Moscow's domination over Hungary or Rumania or China would not pose problems qualitatively different from those encountered by the Kremlin within the confines of Russia proper. This turned out to be an egregious error.

The Force of Nationalism

Two major reasons for the inadequacy of the static model of world communism can be suggested: an underestimation of the forces of nationalism in the contemporary world, and neglect of problems of effective control which increasing size brings to the fore. The first error, the underestimation of nationalism, is ultimately rooted within the very foundations of Marxism. Not that Marx, and even more so Lenin, was not aware of the force of nationalism in the "transitional period" between the era of bourgeois domination and the advent of world socialism. But it would seem that Marx, in tune with Manchesterian liberal thought, felt that nationalism as an operative force in the world was bound to decline and in the long run to wither away. As the nations of the world became more securely tied to the world market, and as industrialization, even though at the price of immense sacrifices and dislocations, would create an essentially similar type of modern civilization all over the world, the forces of nationalism would gradually spend themselves. Once socialism was victorious within a number of nation-states, these states, so it was assumed, would build close fraternal bonds among themselves. The common ties wrought in the effort to build socialism would reduce national divergencies and cleavages to insignificance.

This vision, it now turns out, was utterly false. Outside the Soviet bloc, more particularly in Asia and Africa, nationalism, rather than class struggle, has assumed a central place both as an ideology and as a secular religion. The New Nations in their effort to force a minimal unity out of a welter of regional, tribal or ethnic components have seized upon nationalism as the only notion which might weld together these otherwise divergent forces within their borders. Even though, or perhaps because, modern means of transportation and communication have

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shrunk the globe and released tendencies which push toward global uniformities in a worldwide post-capitalist civilization, nationalism has become all over the non-Soviet world as virulent a force as it ever was in 19th-century Europe. And as it now turns out, the Soviet bloc is by no means exempt from this drift.

When Stalin fell heir to political power over a series of previously independent states around the rim of the Russian heartland, he evidently thought that, once Russian domination was consolidated these countries would be run from the Kremlin in a manner not qualitatively different from the way outlying provinces of Russia proper were administered. Heads of states, and top Party personnel, while nominally independent, so as not openly to depart from previous traditions on the "national question," would in fact be *Gauleiters* ultimately dependent upon and responsible to the Kremlin. Milked for resources in the first stages of reconstruction of Soviet society, they would in later stages benefit from Russia's rebuilt industrial might and gradually be brought up to the Russian level. Like other underdeveloped regions, they would be grateful for the benefits received and willing to accept the direction of the Russian Big Brother. They would bathe in the sun of their all-powerful and benevolent Moscow leaders.

This image was shattered with Tito's revolt. No irreparable harm would have come from an outright defection of Tito to the Western camp. Leninist strategy has always been flexible enough to allow for temporary setbacks. A defection to the capitalist camp by a renegade would have been comparatively easy to digest, but a heresy obstinately clinging to the major goals of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy created permanent damage to the monolithic unity of the Soviet bloc. Tito suggested that one could be a perfectly good Communist without taking orders from Moscow. He thereby shattered the sacrosanct linkage between Communist ideology and Moscow power. He suggested that ideological dominance by the Church Fathers of the Kremlin had been used as a cloak to cover realistic power aims of the Russian state. The Kremlin was not a Third Rome, a spiritual center unifying all believers; it was in fact a hub of centralizing power which attempted to subjugate all areas it dominated to its designs. Tito, while clinging to the major orthodoxies of the faith, rejected the temporal reign of the Kremlin.

Tito could mount his assault upon the Kremlin much earlier than any of the other satellites because he had come to power independently of Moscow, on the crest of a genuine national movement. In the other satellites where the Communist leadership had initially been mere satraps imposed on the population by Russian force, the process of

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disaffection took much longer. Yet in all of them a similar process became operative over time. As a semblance of normalcy began to return to these countries, as they gradually developed their economy and their polity, as new strata of native leaders began to replace the old Moscow-trained personnel in Party and state, they gradually began, even though timidly at first, to develop autonomist tendencies. All these countries were, of course, run by highly authoritarian regimes in which the mass of the population was deprived of political participation. Yet even authoritarian rulers are not insensitive, it turned out, to the needs and desires of their "constituency." Once a measure of stability, and even of well-being, had been reached in these countries, once absolute misery and deprivation had given place to a condition of relative deprivation (i.e., to a situation in which the population learned to compare its lot with that of others within or beyond the Soviet bloc), it became much more difficult for the rulers to ignore the demands of the ruled. And when Khrushchev himself began to define the goals of Communism as plentiful "goulash" for the masses rather than in loftier terms, such demands for the good things of life assumed political salience. Once the Russians stressed abundance and affluence as the proximate, and perhaps ultimate, goals of a good society, it became even more difficult to ignore the insistent query of the satellite populations: "Why isn't what's good for the goose just as good for the gander?"

This is not the place for detail about the differences in the evolution of satellite politics in the fifties and early sixties. Specific historical and sociological factors account for the different speeds with which nationalist demands developed in most of them. The degree of industrialization attained, as well as the presence or formation of an indigenous stratum of intellectuals capable of articulating and formulating popular discontents, were key variables in this respect. But it seems to hold, even though there were marked discrepancies of pace between the various satellite nations, that in all of them polycentric and autonomist tendencies have now asserted themselves in a manner wholly unforeseen but a few years ago by Kremlin planners and Western commentators alike. When even as corrupt and unpopular a regime as that of Rumania dares to raise its voice in opposition to inter-bloc planning goals on the ground that they are contrary to the national interests of Rumania, a qualitative change in the relations between Moscow and the satellites has taken place.

Khrushchev tried several times to come to terms with these increasingly polycentric tendencies. While Stalin had openly asserted the primacy of Soviet interests, Khrushchev soon after his accession aban-

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doned the principle that all Communist parties be subject to the organizational discipline of the Kremlin. He urged instead that the Communist movement be reconstituted as an alliance of parties that were in principle recognized as independent equals, even though they must accept the ideological authority of Moscow. But when he stated in his report to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU that each Communist Party must find its own road to power according to national conditions, this was not meant to apply to the Eastern European satellites. Here Khrushchev was prepared to loosen and modernize the forms of control but not to renounce its substance. Yet the crisis of Soviet authority which followed almost at once in both Poland and Hungary led the Kremlin to make further concessions. "Though unable to gain real independence," says Richard Lowenthal, "the Polish Communists won a higher degree of domestic autonomy than Khrushchev had originally been willing to grant them, and similar autonomy henceforth had to be conceded to the other satellites as well."

A reversion to the earlier pattern of total Kremlin domination over the satellites seems highly unlikely. Nationalism has turned out to be an irresistible force. Monolithic ideological unity, as well as centrally directed economic development throughout the bloc, has turned out to be a chimera. The Kremlin is now forced to let a great variety of flowers bloom within its sphere of influence. National varieties will become pronouncedly dissimilar as they adapt themselves to local climate and environment. It might not be too fanciful to expect that the drift will increasingly be toward a series of federated national states huddled together for protection under the nuclear umbrella of Russia and loosely held together by the common fear of popular revolts from within, yet otherwise following increasingly divergent paths of development. The hopes for a new Russian centralized empire bestriding Eastern, and eventually Western, Europe has turned out to be a pipedream.

The Sino-Soviet Rift—The Chinese Case

The European satellites strive for greater independence from Russia; the aims of the leaders of the Chinese Communist party are different. They not only wish a greater degree of autonomy, they now openly challenge the Soviets for leadership of the Communist camp.

Western commentators have in recent years been engaged in what would seem a rather Byzantine dispute on whether the Sino-Soviet rift ought to be explained by ideological factors or by claims of national interests. This seems to me a rather fruitless way of attacking the issue. Clearly national and ideological motives are intertwined in reality, even though they can be separated analytically. It is probably true that Rus-

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sia's refusal to allocate as large sums of money for the industrialization of China as the Chinese seem to have initially anticipated and desired, started the divergence in the early 1950s. It is also true that the Russians' refusal to share the secrets of the atom bomb with the Chinese came to be seen by them as a symbol of the Kremlin's desire to keep them in subjection. Moreover the Russian attempt to come to a *modus vivendi* with the West raised Chinese fears of being left holding the bag. But it is also true that Sino-Soviet relations began to deteriorate rapidly when the Kremlin, after having accepted a measure of Maoist guidance in international and inter-bloc affairs during the years of upheaval of 1956–58, reverted to a policy of strict emphasis on Kremlin superiority in these matters. By 1958 the Chinese realized that they would not continue to have a major influence on the formation of international Communist policy and they also realized that their place on the Russian list of priorities was fairly low. They now began to develop a clearly distinct ideological line and to assert their claims to preponderant influence over the World Communist movement.

It is essentially correct to explain the current "left" orientation of Mao and his clash with the "right" course advocated by the Soviets in terms of differing circumstances in their respective national polities and economies. Yet one must not forget that the Chinese at times favored a relatively "liberal" line—they supported Gomulka's heresy in 1956 and veered leftward only after the Hungarian fiasco. The major differences between Communism according to Mao and the "goulash Communism" of Khrushchev and his successors can be accounted for by the different stages in the development of Communism in China and Russia respectively.

China is still in the stage of primitive accumulation. Its totalitarian rulers must squeeze from the population the last ounce of energy in order to attain the take-off stage in industrial growth as fast as possible. Hence it must foster a mentality that corresponds to the conditions within a beleaguered fortress. A fanatical purism and "puritanism" corresponds to the needs of the regime. It must again and again attempt to whip up enthusiasm and the spirit of total dedication among the party cadres and the population at large. Total devotions to the state, unquestioned loyalty to the primacy of collective purpose over individual gratification, are functional necessities of totalitarian policies in the early stages of development. And nothing can serve better to sustain total commitment to the state and unquestioned obedience to the leadership than an ideology which feeds on frenzied hatred of the surrounding capitalist world. In the Maoist canon, this world is conceived as the

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source of evil, sin and corruption. Any contamination spells disaster.

This is not to say that the Chinese are necessarily at all times bent on aggression or that they are incapable of compromise when the constellation of forces seems to demand it. They have in fact shown a number of times that they are quite realistic in this respect. But, somewhat like the Soviets in their early stages of development, they combine a measure of flexibility in tactical questions with rigidly held total conceptions of the world. To these puritans of the Eastern world the dichotomy between the Children of Light and the Children of Darkness is as vivid a reality as it ever was to Western puritans.

The Maoist ideology is not only peculiarly adapted to the needs of a totalitarian regime in the stage of primitive accumulation; it is also in tune with the ideological needs of many members of the intelligentsia in the underdeveloped countries. It can hence serve the Chinese penetration of the World Communist movement, especially in the underdeveloped nations. Certain intellectuals of the underdeveloped nations have come to perceive China as a have-not nation, bent, like themselves, upon industrialization in a hurry. The Chinese model can have little appeal among the working class in the industrialized nations of the West. Its insistence on fanatical devotion to the Party and the state, its puritanical bent, has little to offer to Western workers who participate or are about to participate in the benefits the affluent society has to offer. But matters are very different in the miserable circumstances in which Asian or African opposition leaders, or would-be leaders, find their countrymen eking out a meagre living. Among them, the appeals of Maoism are bound to be considerable. The Chinese model suggests to many of them that through an almost superhuman act of will it may be possible to jump over a number of stages of industrial development. They have come to believe that the tantalizing slow pace of modernization which they witness in their own countries might be replaced by an immense effort in which all collective energies will be harnessed to one overriding goal: the overcoming of the sloth and backwardness of the present and the reaching of the Jerusalem of modernization and industrialization, not in an indefinite future, but on the morrow.

It stands to reason that Russia has much less to offer to these men than has China. They increasingly perceive the Russians as a *have nation*. Russia's current problems are of no relevance to them. Her preoccupations with attaining Western standards of living, with enjoying the fruits which almost fifty years of deprivation has made them long for, are far removed from their own hopes and desires. They are "out of phase" insofar as Russia is concerned.

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The Russian Side—Size, Control, and Sympathy

A major clue to the Sino-Soviet rift can be found in the twin notions of "relative size" and "span of control." Structure and size are interrelated. If men, for example, were to attain the size of elephants major anatomical modifications would be required to allow them to function. It is absurd to suppose that organisms, be they social or biological, can just grow indefinitely. There always comes a point where a reorganization of the relationships of the component parts is necessary if the unit is to remain viable.

Historians are familiar with the problems of the ancient empires of the East which, be it in China or the Middle East, had always to contend with centrifugal forces undoing the work of the central power. The whole history of these empires is marked by revolts, breakoffs, and "feudal" tendencies at the periphery. Yet the lesson learned in these cases seemed, until recently, not applicable to modern empires such as that of the Soviets. Modern means of communication and transportation, it was held, provided the means of control denied the rulers of ancient empires. The problem of size could be overcome, so it seemed, in an age in which an order from the Kremlin's nerve center could be almost instantaneously transmitted to its Far Eastern dependencies. This view has now turned out to be shortsighted. Just as in the case of the earlier Wallace-Willkie vision of One World, it confused technological with political and sociological possibilities. The fact that you can now circle the globe in a day or two does not necessarily bring an Indonesian "nearer" to an American; similarly the fact that the Kremlin can now reach any party functionary in the bloc on the long distance phone does not make for greater "nearness" between Mao's party and the Soviets.

What seems involved here is the notion of the "span of control." As the executives of major American corporations know very well, once a certain size has been attained, total control from the center becomes an impossibility, and a measure of decentralization is functionally necessary. In the Russian case, while the span of control might still be stretched to include the whole of the Soviet Empire proper, it cannot be lengthened also to include a gigantic new territory such as China, which, moreover, faces problems totally different from those of Russia at the present.

What was said earlier about nationalism in Eastern Europe and its opposition to Russian domination applies *a fortiori,* to the Chinese. They are a major nation, not a relatively minor satellite, and, moreover, they came to power on their own, not by the force of Russian

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bayonets, as did all East European satellites except Yugoslavia. In addition, they were, when Mao won power, in a stage of economic development much lower than that attained by nearly all East European satellites. This meant that much vaster resources had to be mobilized by Russia were China to be brought up to the Russian level within a relatively short span of time, as the Chinese of course desired. This would have meant gigantic Russian investments in China and a corresponding slowing down in the Russian growth rate. And this, the Russians refused to do.

Fraternal aid to weaker and less developed brother nations, was, of course, a fundamental tenet of Communist philosophy. But when tested in practice it was soon found to be wanting. Here a notion related to that of "span of control" would seem to be applicable. I propose to call it "span of sympathy."

It is a familiar fact that even persons of liberal and humanitarian sentiment tend to be less affected by catastrophic events occurring far away than by those nearer home. Protestations of pan-human sympathies notwithstanding, I take it to be a common phenomenon that Americans are less affected by news of a flood in India than they are by similar news from Ohio. And it is probably true that to the Easterner a disaster in California is less "visible" and less "felt" than would be a similar disaster in New York. Distance, both geographical and cultural, affects the sense of sympathy and identification. Hence, one is more likely to make sacrifices for an afflicted neighbor than for a faceless victim in far off lands. The "span of sympathy" is even narrower than the "span of control."

I take this process to be operative in the relations between the Chinese and the Soviets. In the Russian population at large, but also among the policy-makers, Chinese problems necessarily rated lower than problems nearer home. Russia was indeed willing to contribute economic and technical help to Mao, but it was not willing to tighten the belt at home in order to assist the Chinese who were geographically and culturally very far away.

This general tendency could only be reinforced at a moment in time when Khrushchev had whetted the appetite of Soviet citizens for consumer goods, when visions of affluence began to dance before their eyes. The Russian policy-makers had proclaimed this new "goulash" vision of Communism precisely because they felt an increasing pressure from their "constituents." When they had liquidated Stalin's terroristic means of control and replaced them with more "liberal" versions, it became essential for them to deliver the goods—at least some of the goods. The Chinese claims on their scarce resources thus came at the

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worst possible moment. Not that they did not now have more resources than at earlier stages in their development, but that the claims upon these resources made by the Russian population at large had become so much more insistent.

Aspirations toward a better life seems to me one of the two pillars of the political conscience of the New Soviet Man. Fear of war, is the other. The Chinese could only be seen as threats in regard to both. Mao made "exaggerated" claims to scarce and valued Soviet resources and at the same time suggested policies which endangered the precarious peace. The belligerent stance of the Maoists must be deeply unsettling for Russian policy-makers and population alike. Just when Russian society is discarding the messianic features which marked earlier Soviet history, just when the average Russian citizen—but also the apparatchik —sees a chance to relax a bit in a new-found Victorian comfort, the Chinese seem to be saying that atomic war is but a paper tiger. Just when the Russians are predisposed to arrive at a number of accommodations with the West, the Chinese appeal for a new crusade. No wonder that the Sino-Soviet rift has reached a stage where basic agreements, if not temporary accommodations, are no longer probable or even possible.

The Russians might now develop more understanding for the businesslike matter-of-factness of the "capitalist" world than they have for the fanatical egalitarianism and the puritanical crusading spirit of the Chinese. "Who would benefit from a new war?" a Russian recently asked a foreign correspondent. "Our cities and our new towns would be destroyed, America and Europe would be devastated. But the Chinese do not have much to lose insofar as industry is concerned, and even with immense numbers of dead and wounded, there would still be enough to inundate the world." (*Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 12, 1963.)

Prospects—The World Communist Movement

Were World Communism a purely ideological movement, or were it solely an association of nation-states having political and economic interests in common, one might envisage its perpetuation, though with some major modification, into an indefinite future. The fact is, however, that it is neither. An "ecumenical" co-existence of variant ideological orientations is only possible in regimes in which ideology is not directly tied to the exercise of political power. Such, however, is emphatically not the case in any of the Communist countries. They are all Caesaro-Papist regimes in which priestly (ideological) power is subordinated to worldly (political) power, but where secular authority needs the buttressing of faith in order to maintain legitimacy. The clash of

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national interests between Russia and China is now so intertwined with the clash of creeds that coexistence within a common political or ideological framework seems practically unattainable. Temporary accommodations are possible, even probable; the underlying rift can no longer be bridged.

If the differences between the Chinese and the Kremlin prove ineradicable, as I assume and as the respective historical actors also seem now to assume, then it stands to reason that both sides will accelerate their drive toward gaining allies within the Communist parties of the Third World and the West. I have already stated that the Chinese are likely to be relatively successful in mobilizing allies in the underdeveloped nations. They are likely to be relatively unsuccessful, however, in the industrialized and developed areas of the Western world. Here they will find support only among marginal groups of disaffected students and intellectuals or among especially alienated sectors of uprooted working class or middle class groups still susceptible to messianic appeals. The bulk of the working class, however, being by now not only within but also, though to different degrees, of society, will not provide fertile ground for them.

Nor will the Western Communist parties continue to be passive instruments of the Kremlin. The partial emancipation of the Eastern European satellites has had an impact on the West European Communist leaders. They too now feel that they must adjust if they are not to lose their "constituency" to the new forces operating in the "post-capitalist" modernized welfare states of the West. Chiliastic dreams do not appeal to a working class youth bent on hedonistic pleasures, but neither do the old slogans with which Stalin's Kremlin nourished the imagination of earlier generations of European Communists. Since the death of Stalin and Khrushchev's revelations, since the Hungarian events and the Sino-Soviet split, the Western Communist parties have become orphans in an alien world. They are now engaged in the painful process of mapping the new territory into which they have suddenly been propelled by forces they only imperfectly understand.

It seems likely that the Western Communist parties, slowly shedding their dependence on Moscow directives, will not attempt to reintegrate themselves into the constellation of political forces within their own nation-states. To the new generation of Communist leaders of the West, Peking has little appeal but Moscow can no longer be the Third Rome either. There remains only the hope to play a more significant role within the national polity. We can expect in the years to come efforts on the part of the Communist parties of Italy, France and of other

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Western nations to adopt a more flexible policy. Even at the present time, the Italian Communist party is groping toward an autonomist course, relatively free from Moscow guidance, and with its ears cocked to the internal developments of Italy rather than to the winds of doctrine blowing from Moscow. Belgian trends are similar. The French party is more rigid, but one notices the gradual emergence of parallel tendencies within its ranks.

This increasing "national" development of the various Western Communist parties will in the long run force other leftists to assess anew their relation to them. Léon Blum was quite correct when he asserted before the War that the Communists were not oriented toward the Left but toward the East, but this characterization is not likely to be applicable fully in the future. As the revolutionary potential in the West will further diminish, as the leaders of the Communist parties in the West come to feel that continued reliance on Moscow, continued acceptance of Kremlin tutelage, must fatally decrease their effectiveness at home, it is likely that they will try to become part of the legitimized and institutionalized political dialogue at home. It would seem futile and self-defeating for the non-Communist Left to then refuse such a dialogue with them. The time might come, though it will not be tomorrow, when the orphans of Western Communism might have to be welcomed back to the house of Western democratic socialism.

It is, of course, obvious that for something like this to happen, these Communist parties will have to undergo a fundamental self-transformation. Not only will they have to reject publicly their previous unconditional subordination to Soviet authority, not only will they have to convince their adherents and potential partners alike that their goals are from now on to be carried out within the framework of democratic rules, but they will also have to change the very structure of their organizations. The centralistic and totalitarian form of organization which marked these parties in the past was originally justified by the need to forge an instrument for the revolutionary road to power, and to ensure disciplined obedience to the Kremlin's orders. Once the Communist parties give up these goals they will have to restructure their organizational means. And it is only when they have done so that they can be acceptable as partners by other political forces on the left. "We must expect resistance against organizational change to be tougher than on any other issue," writes Richard Lowenthal. "Here, not only the vested interests of the party machines are at stake, but ultimately the distinctive character of the Communist parties itself—their 'being' as distinct from their 'consciousness.'" This is why it would be foolish to expect them to

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change *in toto* at once. The process is likely to be painful and long drawn out. Yet it would still seem likely that in the long run the Western Communist parties will abandon the Bolshevik organizational structure. They will then come to resemble militant left socialist parties having organizational forms adapted to a non-revolutionary situation in which their only hope can be to win a share of power as partners of other left forces within the framework of national democratic politics.

Two parallel Communist movements will from now on exist in the world. The Chinese-oriented movement is likely to have considerable appeal among the underdeveloped nations, though the Russians will not surrender, without a struggle, ideological and political influence within these countries. In the developed nations, on the other hand, Peking's chances of attracting more than relatively unimportant strata of alienated intellectuals and marginal elements are slim. Here the previously Moscow-oriented parties will maintain themselves against their Chinese competitor, but it is likely that they will succeed in doing so only at the price of further emancipation from Moscow directives and of basic ideological and organizational changes. The ground for messianic and chiliastic visions or for reliance on a Third Rome no longer exists in the West. To the degree that the Western Communist Parties reenter the political dialogue within their nation-states they will be pushed further from dependency on Moscow or Peking.

The days when many on the Left might harbor apocalyptic visions of the Coming Victory of World Communism are definitely gone. World Communism is now irredeemably split into two antagonistic camps. In the West, moreover, the Communist parties, are definitely caught by the drift toward a desacralization of politics. True Believers, messianic and chiliastic prophets, will no doubt continue to peddle their wares, but the bulk of the Western working class has lost its appetite for the Second Coming, even as its appetite for worldly goods has increased.

There is now a chance for the Socialist left, about to be relieved from the Communist incubus which fatally hampered its movements for two generations, to embark anew on its effort to build a more democratic and fraternal society upon the foundations the welfare state has provided. Will it be able to take advantage of this second chance? It is hard to know. One thing seems certain: as the heavy mortgage of Communism is about to be lifted, new failures can no longer be attributed to the impact of World Communism. As the promised World Empire has fallen heir to the clash and contentions among warring kingdoms, the forces of radical democracy and socialism have won a breathing spell —it will depend on them whether they make use of it.

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NOTEBOOK

Ben B. Seligman

Real News and Automated Villains

The counterattack has started. Purveyors of the conventional wisdom have suddenly launched an all-out assault on all those who over the last few years have called attention to the dark side of automation. Last January, within a few days of each other, *Look, Fortune,* and *The New York Times,* issued glowing stories on the blessings of the new technology, minimizing at the same time the ominous government and private reports which dared to suggest otherwise. Aside from the curious phenomenon of simultaneous publication and the striking similarity in their tone, one stands aghast at the distortion of fact, the fundamental ignorance of the new technology, the strings of non-sequiturs, the primitive use of *ad hominem* argument, and the simplistic and archaic conception of the economic forces involved.

Of the first of these extraordinary pieces, by T. G. Harris in *Look* (January 12) the less said the better. To Mr. Harris, the worker is winning his battle against machines by sheer guts and education. The second, entitled "The Real News About Automation," is by Charles Silberman, a *Fortune* editor. It begins with naive exhibition of statistical manipulation and offers with all the excitement of a great discovery a statistic that may very well end all statistics: employment of manufacturing production workers, Silberman says, has increased by one million from 1961 to 1964. *Ergo,* any assertion that automation destroys jobs is a case of false gloom. He then uses his new found number to clobber Donald Michael of the Institute for Policy Studies, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution, Alice Mary Hilton of the Institute for Cybercultural Research, and John I. Snyder, all of whom have been urging that, given the nature of our social system, automation spells trouble.

Well, what about Silberman's numbers? Among the statistician's bag of tricks is the selective use of a base year: you almost can prove anything you want by choosing the appropriate one. Silberman's choice of 1961, which was a low point or "trough" in the employment series, serves his purpose quite well, since any upward movement looks good when you start at the bottom. However, movements from one year to another generally require comparisons of peaks to peaks or troughs to troughs: at least this is the method employed by the highly regarded and quite careful National Bureau of Eco-

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nomic Research. One simply doesn't set a peak against a trough or vice versa when evaluating trends in employment data: to do so is to commit a statistical howler of no small proportions. (Technically, the trough-to-peak, which measures the bottom-to-top spread, indicates the length of one-half a business cycle.)

Suppose we shift the base back to 1959. Then what? Industries that are adopting the new technology, including the computer, continue to suffer declining employment—steel pipes and tubes, primary aluminum, primary non-ferrous smelting, various kinds of machinery, typewriters and sewing machines are all good examples. Nor does Silberman mention other areas in which employment continues to drop, say, motor vehicles, food processing, or petroleum refining, all major users of the new technology. Suppose now we shift the base year back still more, to 1953, in any case the proper year to use from a statistical standpoint since it was the previous high for employment. If this is done the picture shapes up somewhat differently: while total employment in manufacturing between 1953 and 1964 was virtually stagnant (an increase of 50,000, to be exact), production workers, those on the factory floor, *dropped by 960,000.* In the durable goods sector, there was even a decline of 69,000 in total employment: further, production jobs went down by 730,000. In non-durables, production workers were down 230,000. The only major manufacturing sector within these broad classes in which production jobs increased was fabricated metals—a gain of 6,000 over the entire decade. Lest the argument be made that 1953 was a year of overful employment because of Korea, shift the base to 1956, and one still gets a drop of 340,000 production jobs in manufacturing. If technology had nothing to do with these substantial changes in manufacturing employment, what did? After all, it *was* a prosperous decade for industry.

Of course, total employment has increased, but there has also been a virtual explosion in the work force and in population. This phenomenon has been job creating, after a fashion: together with the larger consumer market which it has supplied, the vast growth in output, almost 50 per cent in real dollars, has provided the necessary filip. If there had been no job gain at all we'd be in a perilous condition, indeed. But it has not been sufficient, for most of the job advance, according to BLS data, has come in those soft goods lines that have not yet been caught up in the new technology, and in service and government occupations—beauty shops, hospitals, teaching. *Even by Silberman's own arithmetic, tendentious as it is, the recent alleged resurgence in manufacturing still leaves a deficiency of 700,000 jobs, as compared to 1956* (the date one must use when he compares 1961–64 and the previous five years).

What these data imply is an enormous shift of the employed work force out of manufacturing into services. But this hardly means that a displaced auto worker becomes a government clerk: he has neither the training nor the inclination for that sort of occupation. The likelihood, as we are now discovering, is that the new job, after months of search, is apt to be a poorer one in a repair shop or gasoline

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station. If he persists in looking for something to which he had given the years of his life, he may very well remain unemployed. Meanwhile, most of the new entrants into the work force, at the rate of 1.5 million a year, find no jobs or go to work part time at low pay, generally in the service trades.

One of the difficulties in this furor over employment figures stems from the understandable exaggeration of people like John Snyder and others who have claimed that automation detroys 40,000 jobs a week. Upset by what has been happening, and knowing the nature of the new hardware, they have sought to arouse public awareness with shocking pronouncements. Unfortunately, their estimates are based on calculations as improper as Silberman's: what Snyder did was to apply the rate of productivity growth of about 3 per cent a year to the work force, thereby assuming an inverse one-to-one correspondence between productivity and employment. That is, for every one per cent increase in output per man, he deduced a like decrease in jobs. The relationship is a good deal more complicated.

Let us start with the official hard-core unemployment attributable to structural change, approximately 1.3 million persons. This represents technology's visible toll, but it is only the official portion. To these souls one must add a million or more workers who have dropped out of the labor force because they got tired looking for jobs and are therefore not counted in the official censuses, and about a million in full time equivalents for those working part time. When we're through with these calculations, the sum total comes to a deficiency of 3.8 million jobs over an eleven-year period or an average of 345,000 jobs a year to be written off, mainly because of the dramatic alterations in technology. (I say this since in 1953, when the work force totalled 63 million, unemployment was about 2 per cent, close to the frictional point. The losses estimated above cover only unemployment beyond the frictional and demand deficiency levels.)

Furthermore, Silberman evidently doesn't read his own magazine. Some months ago he asked me where I got all my information on computers and process controls. I told him that I carefully read *Fortune,* among other things. For several years now, this fountainhead of business wisdom has been publishing articles on computers, microminiaturization, artificial intelligence, data-processing, systems analysis and other exotic features of the new technology, which have been fairly accurate. But these were written by other editors (who have just now put all the pieces together in a new book for quick access). Without this background, it is easy for Silberman to minimize the application of automated controls in such industries as oil refining, chemicals, and paper. He cites the fact that there are at present only 300 process control computers in the U.S. (Industry sources, cited in *Business Week,* say 400, but no matter.) Ready as they were for automation, says he, these industries never took the next step. Indeed! Perhaps he doesn't know that 10 years ago there were only a handful of process control operations in existence or that in 1965 it is expected another 100 to 125 will be installed or that by 1970

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manufacturers expect to have completed 4,000 of them. Are we then really a long way off from the completely automatic factory, as our *Fortune* expert asserts? We haven't too far to go to 1970.

Consider the steel industry, thus far rather laggard in adopting new technical advances. But now the combination of the basic oxygen furnace (which replaces on the average five open hearth ovens), continuous casting, and automatic rolling mills has given a considerable boost to process controls. Manufacturers of process computers expect steel to be an important customer in 1965. The effect is apt to be synergistic, that is, greater than the sum of its parts.

But the force of the new technology compels even Silberman to concede that *in time* computers will control much of American production. He just doesn't think machines will displace people. While this makes the business archon something of a philanthropist, officials in the United Steelworkers Union look with marked trepidation on what these technical developments will do to the work force in that industry. A recent report on the displacement of factory clerks by computers prepared by the Wisconsin State Employment Service had this to say: *"The number of new jobs and positions created by computerization was insignificant in proportion to the number of positions eliminated by the computer."* (An ironic note: immediately following Silberman's article, *Fortune* published one captioned, "The New Glow in Steel Technology," replete with pictures of a new bar mill, a vacuum degassing unit, and a reversing mill with an automatic monitoring system that controls plate thickness, width, length, slab temperature and roll force and which drastically reduces labor requirements.)

And so we come finally to Silberman's contention that there are no fully automated processes for any major product in any industry. If by this flimsy straw man he means that absolutely *no* humans are not to be found in any automated installations as yet, he is right. But that is hardly the point. Even in a completely automatic power plant there are one or two men around reading dials and a petrochemical factory still has several hundred workers to climb ladders and tap on tubes and do data logging. Yet even these men can be eliminated since the computer is fully capable of recording the data, while the ladder climbing is a form of industrial exercise intended to keep maintenance men busy. Interestingly enough, Silberman cites Texaco's Port Arthur refinery, which employs several thousand men, to support his argument that humans are still necessary. Of course, he doesn't tell his readers that most of the displacement occurred several years prior to the time he's writing about. Furthermore, when the Oil and Chemical Union struck the plant a few years ago, *production went on unimpeded with all the data logging and dial watching done by supervisors.* And to deny, as Silberman does, even inferentially, that job loss in meatpacking has any relation to automation is a wilful distortion of fact. Ralph Helstein, president of the Packinghouse Workers Union, would be ready, I'm sure, to supply the evidence. The inability to locate the TransfeRobot, one of John

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Snyder's mechanical manipulators, means that this machine is a myth, says Silberman; but the *Scientific American* (October, 1964) describes a number of such devices in use which are programmed to repeat the same transfer operation indefinitely at a constant speed. Silberman hints also that "real time" data processing, that is obtaining and manipulating data on a computer simultaneously with an event, is a mythologic concoction as well. But finally, he concedes, with much reluctance, that "sooner or later" we will have the technical capability to substitute machines for men "in most of the functions men now perform." A remarkable conclusion, yet what else can he say after realizing that all his jerry-built arguments have collapsed?

Much more devious is Peter Drucker's article, "Automation Is Not The Villain" in *The New York Times Magazine* (January 10). One of the nation's shrewdest managerial apologists, Drucker once hailed automation as a harbinger of paradise. A decade ago he predicted that the new technology would lead to the greatest advance in upgrading that labor would ever experience. Routine jobs, he asserted, would become a thing of the past, and only technical, maintenance and professional occupations would comprise the work force of the future. Yet the facts now indicate Drucker to have been a poor prophet. For, as James Bright of Harvard University demonstrated, many of the maintenance and technical jobs are transitory. After an automated installation has jelled, there is little need for highly skilled personnel: even now high school graduates and dropouts are being trained to put reels of tape into computers. There is nothng else for them to know, since the machine does all the work. The prospect for high labor skills in the future is not nearly as great as was once anticipated. With increasing automaticity, control over machines is exercised by a machine, measurement is done electronically, and computers can do the data logging. The outcome appears to be a relatively small gain in employment for highly skilled workers, a market apt to be quickly saturated anyway, counterbalanced by unemployment of the unskilled, who if lucky, can drift into the odds and ends of the service trades.

But all this means nothing to Drucker, for in his latest oration he places exclusive blame for unemployment squarely on the shoulders of the unemployed. Am I exaggerating? Referring to teen-age unemployment, which at 15 per cent is enormous, he says the teen-ager may have priced himself out of the market. The last time I heard this argument was from a supermarket operator who wanted to hire youngsters at 85 cents an hour. And what of Negro youth? asks Drucker. They just live in the wrong place: while Negroes live in the city slums, the job opportunities are in the suburbs. (One supposes that obtuseness must be seen to be believed.) Besides, he continues, women are taking all the jobs that used to go to teen-agers. Obviously, the kids of America are lazy. Look what happens when they come of age and enter adulthood: the jobless rate suddenly drops. Indeed it does, if only because employers are more likely to select a 21-year old than a 17-year old. Of course, Drucker

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doesn't tell his *Times* readers that there are still 560,000 unemployed between the ages of 20 and 24.

I shan't go into Drucker's use of employment statistics: it's the same mishmash into which Silberman dips—an illegitimate use of base years, putting supervisory and production workers into the same bin, assorted non-sequiturs (after talking about man-hours, Drucker drags in take-home pay by the heels), straw men of a more flimsy nature than Silberman's, and citations from the usual anonymous professionals in the Labor Department. On this last point: says Drucker, ". . . the most experienced and most respected labor economists in the country, the professionals in the U.S. Department of Labor, are convinced that we are today liquidating jobs at a lower rate than at most times in the past." Or again: "Labor Department economists believe that we create new jobs at a somewhat higher rate than we did in past periods. . . ." Now, although those of us who are labor union professionals might not share completely Drucker's sudden enthusiasm for the bureaucrat, we do have high regard for our colleagues over in the Labor Building. And since we do meet often with Labor Department staff, it is correct to say that never have we heard, at least in this writer's fairly long experience, anything quite so nonsensical from a Department spokesman. Not even a few phone calls could turn up a hint of who might have said or written what Drucker says they did. Were these citations the normal "not-to-be-attributed-to-me" items, or were they just imaginary?

But if these are products of autistic thinking, there are several other gems in Drucker's piece that need exposing, because they seem related to something that Labor Department experts did say. Here's one: "The Department of Labor economists have come up with a figure of 187,000 manufacturing jobs a year lost during the fifties because of improved productivity . . ." with the latter traceable to a variety of causes, not merely technology. First of all, the estimate, presented in a paper by Ewan Clague and Leon Greenberg of the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1962, was 200,000 lost jobs a year; secondly, they *were* talking about the "disemployment" of workers as a result of technological change. These decreases, they said, ". . . could be regarded as technological displacement on the grounds that all changes in the structure of output stem from technological change, since it is the latter which results in substitution of materials and products as well as in new processes." (The disparity between BLS estimates and my own stem from differences in statistical approach: in any case, from a global standpoint, they are close enough.)

Drucker then quotes Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz to the effect that "Automation creates more jobs than it destroys." But he does not add the rest of the sentence—". . . the statement itself suffers so from semantic fever that it is barely rational." Of course, such argument by authority is fruitless, since neither Mr. Wirtz nor Mr. Drucker can prove the proposition; moreover, there is ample evidence to the contrary, and Mr. Wirtz knows it better than Drucker. Further, one can always quote Mr. Wirtz against Mr. Wirtz. For example: ". . . the habit of some to dis-

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miss automation as only a new phase which exaggerates the significance of the current stage of a continuing process . . . is today a form of sleepwalking." Or: "Unemployment is today the infantile paralysis of the economy, striking down teenagers at three times the rate it attacks adults. . . . With automation spreading now . . . the proportion of jobs open to new and untrained workers is dropping rapidly." Again: ". . . to say that automation means employment, not unemployment . . . is a selective interpretation of history which develops around a concept of progress measured in terms of automobile horsepower. . . . The other side of the question . . . is that in terms of particular individuals the casualty lists are beginning to mount to alarming proportions."

If he had wanted opinions rather than facts, Mr. Drucker might have examined the results of the latest Manpower Research Council poll on automation. Based on the responses of some 200 corporate executives, MRC's report indicated that 57 per cent of its respondents *did not think* that automation would increase jobs in the next five years; within their own industries, 70 per cent expressed no such expectations; 78 per cent did not foresee increased production jobs in their own firms; and 79 per cent anticipated no gain in the office. Put somewhat differently, expectations that jobs would decline in the coming half-decade in the respondent's own industries and firms exceeded expectations for increases. That the opinions foreseeing more jobs in the nation as a whole (43 per cent) were greater than those predicting an absolute decline (28 per cent, although 29 per cent expected the same level of jobs) merely indicates that most business men hope that other industries and other companies will take up the slack.

Finally, Drucker, still insisting on his upgrading effect despite all the facts demonstrating otherwise, attributes workers concern over automation to a feeling that craft is being consolidated or even eliminated. A generation ago the mechanic decided himself how to operate a machine tool or to service the equipment. Now an engineer lays out the procedure, says Drucker. Clerical workers discover methods experts doing the scheduling of work. High level skills have become transferable from one trade to the next. All this, he continues, permits the design of jobs which combine crafts, but the whole process is merely a matter of ordinary improvements worked out by the genius of management. Machines supposedly have nothing to do with such developments.

Let us see. Numerical controls operated by computers carve metal pieces with greater precision than a skilled mechanic can; process control computer systems not only eliminate the brewmaster's nose but impel precisely the sort of plant layout rearrangements that Drucker asserts stem solely from management skills; the size of crews on ships are cut in half by automated bridge devices; and printing is being converted from a craft into an industry by phototypesetting and computer techniques that do all the justifying and hyphenation of copy. In industry after industry, with varying degrees of speed, mechanization and automation are being employed to substitute machines for men. Yet the peddlers of conventional wisdoms are ever ready

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in their usual irresponsible manner to convince the working man that he must exercise his patience, for in the long run the corporate archon and his machine will bestow untold blessings upon his grandchildren. Unfortunately, by that time the worker—as well as most of us—will be dead.

Paul Potter and Todd Gitlin

A Report from "Students for a Democratic Society"

As the call for Consensus continues to roll from the lips of Lyndon B. Johnson, the American Left must begin to search for the sources and qualities of dissidence that could break progressive forces loose from Johnson's grip. But the forces of breakdown, we suspect, are *not* inherent in the apparent contradictions among the coalition's inhabitants. Although the labor "movement" cannot but squirm about its eroding position, there is little indication that it will cease following its usual ways. And although big business must shy at its ties with the Democrats, it is hard to see disappointments on the horizon that would lead it to desert the President for a free-for-all fight to recapture a Republican party probably doomed to permanent minority status. Moderate civil rights and peace groups will vie for their shares of the Great Pie; and proponents of liberal concerns running from medicare to conservation will be sympathetically heard (within acceptable limits) by the Administration.

If the Great Consensus is to be jarred, it must be by groups outside it, finding ways to articulate the deep and divisive issues that are today mostly hidden. Such a thrust would raise issues the Johnson administration cannot tolerate – shared abundance, democratic control of economic power, etc.; it would pose a clear choice of loyalties for disgruntled though currently collared liberal elements of the Consensus. What we lack, and what a tired, introspective, and only vicariously engaged Left has failed to provide, is any sense of a strategy for raising those issues. The result is that emerging movements are left to live (and in the case of the peace movement, to die) in their solitary niches, and are drawn only accidentally toward more comprehensive definitions of problems, goals, and strategies. In this situation, the burden of isolation and the necessity for "tangible results" in the end must suck the creators of insurgent politics into the Consensual whirlpool.

This notion of a needed strategy differs from the usual polemic about how the old order must fall. It requires, besides a diagnosis of "contradictions" and "forces" (though those are needed too), a live sense of the varied roles

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people can play. It requires, we think, analysis of recent experiences in building movements of the hitherto silent, and an understanding of how the still nascent experience of these movements can be used to catalyze a broadly based movement for democracy and shared abundance.

If such a strategy is to emerge, it will undoubtedly grow from the frustrations generated by the limits of the current movement—i.e., through the efforts of those who have already become active. In this respect we should be looking hopefully toward the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which has done more than any other group to demonstrate, plan and work for basic democratic change. It is true that the peculiarity of SNCC's environment, their position as agrarian revolutionists amidst the whirl of the urban revolution, limits dramatically the extent to which their experience can be generalized. But still one feels that the SNCC effort has cast light on the kind of movement America needs.

It is against this background that it makes sense to talk about Students for a Democratic Society, the student affiliate of the League for Industrial Democracy, and the role it is beginning to play. Simply put, SDS is a grouping of students and young people who have come to see the need for a New Left politics and strategy, and are playing important roles in the crystallization of each.

SDS today reflects in many ways the maturation of the first wave of student radicalism that crested in 1960. Its first two years, 1961–62, mirrored the need activist students felt to derive some order and values from the world they had inherited – HUAC, sit-ins, peace marches, multiversities – and their quest for a home in which to search for rudiments and extract from them a strategy. In other words—and this is important for an understanding of the organization's later dialectical development—SDS's major contribution during its first two years was intellectual and ideological. Although most SDS members were activists in different movements, they sought *in SDS* a common analysis of the American scene, a set of values to guide their work, and, after a while, a strategy to focus their activity. The substance of what emerged is not easily summarized here, but what stands out is a departure from the formalism of American democratic theory as well as a deep skepticism about socialist formulations of all varieties. In their place came the simple but embracing notion of participatory democracy: the right, and ability, of the individual to be engaged in the control of the environments and decisions that govern his life. Stemming from this value comes a desire to create the capacity in men to "translate personal troubles into public issues," through analysis, through organizations and action. In the 1962 *Port Huron Statement,* social institutions were analyzed against that standard; and from the vision of a truly democratic order flowed critiques of American corporate power, the cold war, maldistributed abundance, racial injustice, and political stultification. The emphasis then was on the universities as microcosms of the larger American distortion of priorities, and on students as the agents of change.

The view of SDS at that time was

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still one of a loose coalition of people and ideas, synthetic of a wide range of strategies and eclectic in its approaches to social movements. But there were built-in limits to that kind of eclecticism; often it seemed to overpower the guiding ideology, for that ideology demanded a central strategic focus, and SDS had none. Moreover, the kind of social change called for seemed as distant as ever, while the hoped-for coalescence among movements did not take place. It was argued, and to some extent justly, that SDS, although it talked a lot, *did* little but cast greedy eyes on other organizations. And all the time SDS people were growing frustrated in their university cages, just as the SDS analysis predicated they would.

During 1963 these factors blended and forced a series of important decisions. SDS had received a grant for the purpose of disseminating radical economics material on campuses, very much in the Fabian tradition. But conversations with SNCC workers had convinced SDS leaders that some of the money should be used to experiment with the possibility of organizing poor whites—in order to deflect the projected "white backlash," and to begin building alliances capable of joining with the civil rights movement for common ends. In September, a one-year "college drop-out" (an increasingly frequent phenomenon in SDS) was sent to Chicago to "organize white youth." At the time, that was all the instruction we could give him; it was an odd assignment.

At about that time, the SDS chapter at Swarthmore College was working in the Negro ghettoes of nearby Chester, Pa., organizing block clubs and a boycott of a hideously overcrowded and archaic elementary school. Imprisoned during the boycott, a group of native Chester Negroes drafted a 37-point program of demands—most of them non-racial in character, (jobs, housing, health care, etc.). Out of these two concrete experiences, as well as the need to devise and implement a central activity and strategy for the organization, came a decision in December 1963 to experiment with organizing in a few Northern communities, particularly to test whether poor whites and Negroes could be organized in compatible or unified efforts into a movement based on economic grievances. By summer, about 150 students were carrying out that experiment in nine cities; of these projects, six continued into the fall and winter with about 40 full-time organizers, most of them recent students making long-term commitments to their adopted communities. Two new projects have been added since.

The theory behind this move is relatively simple: that the route to significant change is through the creation of new political power capable of challenging the Consensus; that this requires substantial and hopefully exemplary organization among potentially radical groupings. SDS chose to work among the underclasses not simply because their grievances are more blatant, but because they are least tied to the system of sanctions that encloses the mainstream of the society; they can be the first to move, but hopefully their motion can be made to jog the complacency of others who belong in the movement. Given this basic no-

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tion, experimentation has been the hallmark, and the strategy has been and is ever being adjusted accordingly. Two of the projects have concentrated on organizing the unemployed (Negro and white in Baltimore, white in Chicago), initially to expedite the handling of their compensation claims, later for more fundamental purposes. The road to sophistication and radicalization of outlook is a tortuous one, and numerically, the success of these Unions for Jobs and Income Now (U-JOIN) has been slight compared to the experience of the 30s. Whites particularly must be made to see that there are collective solutions to the problems they face as atomized individuals, and programs must suit the needs of people whose despair has not been tempered by even small success, personal or organizational. The hard-earned lesson, the only one compatible with the formative goal of participatory democracy, is that the poor themselves must be involved in the direction of their own organizations; only democracy can strengthen these new organizations to survive failures and "successes," as the unions of the unemployed in the '30s did not. Beyond this, top-down administration of "help for the poor" is precisely the ground on which the U-JOINs find the Johnson War on Poverty culpable, and it is for this reason—not simply because of the War's smallness—that they fight it and propose alternatives.

In Newark, N.J. and Chester, Pa., SDS organizers have been working in poor Negro ghettoes, forming block organizations that begin with neighborhood improvement projects (demanding play streets, etc.), and graduate to more basic questions of education, jobs, housing. The style of organization in these projects contrasts with the more militant, charismatic and racial appeals that have marked other Northern Negro protest movements, though each project has felt these tensions in different ways and with different outcomes (there is miliance, too, in the non-racial tactic of rent strikes). But the tenor of the Northern Negro ghettoes is such that organization comes more naturally than in white neighborhoods, as does its antithesis – hostility and violence from city machines and a host of vested interests. The Newark Community Union Project has been visited by police harassment and arbitrary arrests, by charges of riot-mongering, by window breaking, by evictions and suits entered by fearful landlords. We have learned the hard way that the face of Northern power differs only in degree, not in quality, from its Southern counterpart.

Here, too, organizers are excited to find "their" organizations no longer theirs, but filled with new leaders who do not hesitate to dispute the organizers' notions. Experience and goals (long-run as well as immediate) come to be shared as the organizer and the poor people develop a capacity to learn from one another. The logic of democracy dictates that community people be hired as organizers, and, in fact, this is happening.

In Cleveland, to illustrate a third approach, poor white (many of them emigrants from jobless Appalachia) are being organized. Perhaps the most frustrating aspect here is that the kind of latency so thick in the Negro ghetto, the pressure and solidarity that

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have built up for decades under the capstone of segregation, is missing. The economy seems to have enough room for poor whites to convince many of them, and their onlooking neighbors, that personal bootstraps are the way of salvation. (What is frequently missed is that this progress takes place almost entirely *within* the marginal or menial sectors of the economy.) The organizer's most difficult task is to formulate concerns common to many of the disenfranchised and dispossessed. Interestingly, most success seems to have come in areas where the government has already defined "sub-classes" of people who experience and comprehend roughly the same set of troubles; mothers living on public welfare payments, and public housing tenants. To the organizer, public assistance and housing are potentially what the factory system was to the industrial organizer. And the results have been promising, although some grand-inquisitorial managers of the Welfare State have not hesitated to employ the time-tested art of Red-baiting to keep their wards "happy" — and in their place.

All this has been immensely and sometimes even paralyzingly stimulating for SDS; it has posed the paradox that most of the full-time staff of the organization are non-students organizing non-members full-time, while almost the entire membership (about 1500 at this writing) are full-time students. But it remains true that partly despite and partly because of the galvanizing quality of the community organizing projects, the student base has continued to grow; there are now over fifty campus chapters, about twice the number of a year ago. The chapters vary a great deal in size and sophistication, but all contrast sharply with student work of the early 60s; where, four years ago, action itself was considered an accomplishment, student radicals today make much more stringent demands on themselves and their peers, for the quest for strategy is universal in the organization. In Texas, chapters are being organized to fight for free higher education, in cooperation with the liberal Democratic Coalition of labor, Negroes, intellectuals, and Latin Americans. At Berkeley, the SDS chapter has been active in the Free Speech Movement and instrumental in enlarging its scope to a broad-gauge attack on the factory notion of education. In North Carolina, SDS people are working with unions to make labor a political force in the state. Boston SDS members worked actively in the Noel Day Congressional campaign in Roxbury, out of which has come a full-time SDS organizing project.

The older, more diffuse concern with peace is also being sharpened. There is a full-time project in the Boston area to organize defense workers and intellectuals for the conversion of military facilities to peacetime uses. In the face of test-ban and limited *détente*, when much of the old peace activism has faded, SDS is trying to focus the attention of academics and others on the role of America in the Third World, particularly to point the finger at abuses of corporate power. A series of pamphlets is planned; so are demonstrations designed to expose and challenge the role of American corporations in bolstering South

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African apartheid, and a demonstration in Washington for an end to the Vietnamese war.

To build from all this a successful strategy of political change is a task that must defy the imagination of even the most astute formula-maker. Nor can we say that what SDS is doing and thinking comprehends the diffused concerns of its various constituencies; in a refreshing way it is "getting out of hand." What we can say is that SDS has committed itself to hypothesize, to test, and to revise, trying to maintain throughout an openness to the long list of possibilities that remain blurred and untested. Probably none of us in SDS would say with any assurance that what is now being tried will definitely work. The point, rather, is that for one of the few times in the last twenty years a group of conscious radicals is attempting, seriously and systematically, to build a strategy and movement for basic change that reaches beyond the armchair but does not ignore it. And that, it seems to us, is a good and hopeful thing.

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BOOKS

Alasdair MacIntyre

Modern Society: An End to Revolt?

ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN: STUDIES IN THE IDEOLOGY OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY, by Herbert Marcuse. Beacon Press: 1964. $6.00.

Herbert Marcuse's latest book is an essay in pessimism so profound that it is contradicted by the act of writing it. For to write a book presupposes at least a possible audience and yet if Marcuse's conclusions are correct his book can have almost no audience. His thesis is that we live in a society capable of absorbing both intellectual criticism and working-class revolt. "Technical progress, extended to a whole system of domination and coordination, creates forms of life (and of power) which appear to reconcile the forces opposing the system and to defeat or refute all protest in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination." For whom then can Marcuse be writing? The lack of an answer to this question perhaps explains the solipsistic style, opaque with academic abstraction, in which the book is written. This is a man talking to himself. What does he say?

In the earlier part of his book Marcuse analyzes what he calls "advanced industrial society" whose social forms he takes to be determined by the nature of its technological achievement. USA, Western Europe, and USSR are all versions of this society. This premise of the argument ensures that in Marcuse's perspective the differences between the political institutions of USA and USSR, or of USA and Britain, can make no or very little difference to the future of historical development of these societies. We should therefore note that a crude and unargued technological determinism underlies the argument from the outset. What social forms does advanced technology produce, on Marcuse's view?

Those of an administered welfare society in which a rising standard of living makes compliance with the demands of the technical apparatus a rational and inevitable response. The technical apparatus is a system of powers set over individuals and dominating them. The rival and countervailing powers which make up the system form a unity in their resistance to qualitative change. The system serves the irrational ends of unchecked technological development, and continually rationalizes the means to that development. Individuals are alienated from the system not by having their wants and needs denied, but by having them gratified, the cost of such gratification is that the wants and

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needs shall be only what the system allows them to be. The final corruption is of language and thought; a concrete, empirical functional style of thought disables criticism by refusing it the use of concepts and categories which would enable it to transcend and to criticize the system.

From this theme an easy transition is made to the second part of Marcuse's book, which is an account of contemporary philosophy, attacking it as the one-dimensional, uncritical, intellectual counterpart of the one-dimensional, uncritical society. According to Marcuse earlier philosophy provided a method for transcending and criticizing existing forms of life and thought, while such recently influential philosophers as Wittgenstein, Ryle, and Austin confine us to sterilized and anesthetized versions of everyday speech. "If linguistic analysis . . . contributes to enclosing thought in the circle of the mutilated universe of ordinary discourse, it is at best entirely inconsequential. And, at worst, it is an escape into the non-controversial, the unreal, into that which is only academically controversial."

These contentions form the substance of the book: they are supported and illuminated by a number of very briefly developed themes. Marcuse, for example, seems to hold that we are living in a post-Marxist epoch. The driving force of Marxist revolution was to be poverty and deprivation. These the Welfare State has removed. "The reality of the laboring classes in advanced industrial society makes the Marxian 'proletariat' a mythological concept; the reality of present-day socialism makes the Marxian idea a dream." Nonetheless from Marxism Marcuse retains the notion of a relation between the content of thought and the forms of social life of a general kind and at times he goes even further in retaining a Marxist framework.

In the last few pages he envisages one possible chance—no more than a chance—of liberation in "the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colors, the unemployed and the unemployable. They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions." But this is only a glimmer of chance in the darkness of near inevitability.

The whole book is informed by a Stoic determination not to betray the values of either Aristotle or Marx in a hostile world. The quotations from Adorno and Walter Benjamin help to situate the argument in that civilized, neo-Hegelian, neo-Marxist academic style of thought which has stimulated so much worthwhile enquiry. And yet —the questions inexorably pose themselves. Is what Marcuse says *true*? Is it warranted by evidence? Is the sense of imprisonment which Marcuse conveys the product of a technological society or of his own conceptual scheme?

In the end I shall argue that the small kernel of truth in Marcuse's argument concerns the autonomy and the relatively blind and unguided character of technological development. But because his vision of this truth obscures his vision of the nature of our society as a whole it is important to bring into the foreground those

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points on which Marcuse is simply wrong. I shall begin by disputing his account of the nature of contemporary philosophy; then I shall question his actual and implied account of the relationship of philosophy to social life; and finally I shall argue that he misconstrues the nature of contemporary industrial society. But radical as this range of disagreement promises to be, I must declare a more elementary reaction to Marcuse's book, an initial distaste, a prejudice on two counts. The first concerns Marcuse's attitude to facts: in his Introduction he refers airily to "the vast sociological and psychological literature" and he protects himself against counter-examples by saying that "My analysis is focused on tendencies in the most highly developed contemporary societies. There are large areas within and without these societies where the described tendencies do not prevail—I would say: not yet prevail." But he is arguing for the truth of certain high-level generalizations which need to be supported by evidence; to advance them without evidence is to cut oneself off from reality in the most radical way of all.

Quite as dangerous as Marcuse's cavalier attitude to facts is his attitude to the Welfare State, presented in his pages as simply a device for administering opiates to the masses. What the coming of the Welfare State and full employment meant in Britain, for example, was that large numbers of working-class people were no longer ill, ill-fed, ill-clothed, and insecure. To see this only as a means of dominating them is both irresponsible and perverse, a product of the higher complacency. But the root of Marcuse's error here is theoretical as well as moral and cannot be uncovered adequately until a later stage in the argument.

On the nature of contemporary philosophy Marcuse probably presents a very convincing picture to those readers who lack any acquaintance with the texts he is discussing. In fact he takes the views of quite different philosophers, tears them out of context, glues them together and then represents his own arbitrary construction as the philosophy of linguistic analysis. In so doing he omits, distorts, or simply misrepresents certain aspects of contemporary philosophy which are crucially important for social theory. First, there is its self-consciousness. The linguistic character of contemporary philosophy is partly bound up with its insistent questioning of the character of its own enquiries; and it is partly a matter of its preoccupation with the nature of human action. One thread running through Wittgenstein's later philosophy is the way in which the possession of language is linked up with other distinctively human characteristics; another is the nature of the unity between the inner realm of thoughts and feelings and the outer realm of behavior. Wittgenstein's genre here is not that of the straightforward treatise expounding a "view." He works tentatively through the variety of inadequate assertions we are inclined to make. The philosophy is found in the whole process. One cannot isolate assertions and proclaim them as Wittgenstein's standpoint. Or rather, insofar as one can do this, one is always left with the denial of an error rather than the assertion of a truth.

Austin's achievement was different, but also partly negative. His interest

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in language was distinctively different and much more systematic than Wittgenstein's. But his attention to the distinctions embodied in ordinary speech and his attempt to classify these distinctions draw part of their importance from the prevention of plausible error. So in *Sense and Sensibilia*, for example, Austin nowhere advances a "view" on perception; rather he shows that the statement of certain errors depends partly on ignoring distinctions marked in ordinary linguistic usage.

Now one could not gain an inkling of these facts from Marcuse's account. And just as Marcuse ignores the self-consciousness embodied in the linguistic concerns of contemporary philosophy, so he ignores its anti-empiricism and its awareness of the social context of thought. The hero of empiricist epistemology (of rationalism too) is the isolated knowing subject out of whose experiences and thoughts the world of reality and of concepts has to be reconstructed. Nothing is more deeply imprinted upon contemporary analytical philosophers of all schools than the realization that it is through language that experience is grasped, that our conceptual schemes are not passive mirrorings but active graspings of reality, that each individual is inducted into a language that preexists him, that a social framework of rules and practices provides the background against which both concepts and experience have to be made intelligible. But of all this not a glimmering in Marcuse, who is not only wrong about the content of contemporary philosophy, but also and perhaps consequently about its necessary conformism.

So far as society is concerned, Marcuse is also living a private world. Britain presumably counts as an advanced industrial society in his terms, so I shall restrict myself to British examples. What of course does mark contemporary society—and not only in Britain—is its compartmentalization, so that a subject like philosophy very much goes its own professional way, and what impact it has upon society at large depends not just on the theories advanced by philosophers, but also on the way in which universities have come to be organized. Thus the difference between the ideological impact of the Idealists in late nineteenth-century Britain and the impact of contemporary philosophy is not by any means only a matter of the different kinds of philosophy involved, but quite as much a matter of the different role that philosophy has in British universities and that the universities have in British society. And this would have been a more illuminating point for Marcuse to have fastened upon. For in two of the characteristics of contemporary philosophy as an institutional discipline we find a combination of characteristics that pervade other areas of the life of advanced industrial society: self-consciousness about one's activities and compartmentalization that limits their effects. Neither of these characteristics is static in the face of technological and social change. Consider, for example, their emergence in relation to the notion of a welfare state.

It was only gradually that people in Britain became conscious of themselves as living in a society where a right to minimal standards of welfare was presupposed. They encounter both

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need and provision for it in widely separated spheres: housing, health, schools, pensions, and so on. Even a modern affluent working-class, even a working class with a socialist tradition has to learn that a welfare state is a unity; they come to learn too that it is essentially a realm of conflict in which the real benefits of welfare are always in danger of being undermined by defense spending, by the encroachment of private interests, or simply by inflation, and thus a realm in which it needs a good deal of running even to keep standing in the same place. So a working-class political self-consciousness about welfare as a point at which elementary rights have continually to be reclaimed seems to be one of the preconditions of the maintenance of welfare in an advanced capitalist society. This at least seems to be the moral of the last seventeen years in Britain.

The problem of a politics that goes further than this is partly the problem of a working class that sixty years ago had to set itself the goals of welfare and now has to find for itself new political goals. Marcuse's talk of "domination" and "liberation" is too abstract to be helpful here; and it is important to see that it is the inability of trade unionists to ask the relevant questions about future goals that is crippling to the British Labour movement, quite as much as any domination by technologically based social forces. Of course this inability is itself part of the total social situation; but it is a product of the traditional pragmatism of British social democracy which has now run out into sand, rather than simply a product of contemporary technology.

If Marcuse were to argue that these points hold good only of Britain and not of either the United States or continental Europe, I should of course, agree. For it is the specific and differing histories of the labor movement, of political democracy, and of the welfare state in these three areas that determine the possible effects of technological innovation in such society. But Marcuse's technological determinism could securely not allow him to concede this. Marcuse is, of course, right to stress the automatism of the process of investment, production, consumption, and reinvestment as it now exists in our society. But this is not a hidden automatism such as informed the unplanned character of capitalist production in the nineteenth century; this is a visible process and consciousness of

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its automatic character is more and more widespread. Yet such awareness is not enough. The weakness of the far Left in recent politics is that it has not been able to offer the labor movement political goals which would enable it to break the hold of the technological development upon the economy. This weakness is rooted in the Left's own history, above all in its continuous preference for dramatic denunciations to undramatic factual analysis. Marcuse's work is only the latest in a long tradition. It was always a bad tradition and his book has not improved it.

"Partial, Passionate and Political"

THE ANXIOUS OBJECT: ART TODAY AND ITS AUDIENCE, by Harold Rosenberg. Horizon Press. 270 pp. Illus. $7.50.

I praised Harold Rosenberg's first volume of criticism *(The Tradition of the New)* for its variety: this new volume must be praised for its steady concentration on one subject, the crisis of society and of art. The crisis is not a new one—it has been with us for more than a hundred years and Baudelaire was its anxious prognosticator. Baudelaire is barely mentioned in *The Anxious Object,* but I think of him as I read this new book: it makes the same demand for a criticism that should be "partial, passionate and political"—and, to make the comparison still more exact, "amusing and poetic." The new note introduced into art criticism by Mr. Rosenberg might be called a relevant wit—not satire, much less irony (always a rare commodity in the literature of the United States), but an aptness of phrasing, if necessary of neologizing ("globalism," "gagart"—"the art of ice-cream sodas, seven-foot toothpaste tubes, movie marquees") that give a consistent liveliness to a text that is nevertheless quite savagely serious. Mr. Rosenberg's intention is to restore objectivity to "the only remaining intellectual activity, not excluding theology, in which pre-Darwinian minds continue to affirm value systems dissociated from any observable phenomena."

The phenomena may be observed at different levels. The fashionable level exploited by Pop Art is one of "congenital superficiality," resulting in "a qualitative monotony that could cause interest in still another gag of this kind to vanish overnight." By contrast the Abstract Expressionism it would displace "may well be still the newest in terms of potential originality and depth." This comparison is only to be sustained by defending the social relevance of Abstract Expressionism, or, not to avoid the issue, of what Marxist critics like to call Formalism. Mr. Rosenberg's apologia at this point is

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perhaps a little evasive. He points out, very rightly, that the usual reliance on Cézanne for "a rationale of structure" is merely a question of emphasis —"one would like to see Cézanne associated for a change . . . with Expressionism and even (via de Kooning and Hans Hofmann) with Action Painting, and to see Van Gogh brought forward among painters of 'structure' by way, for example, of his color theories. After all, historical continuity depends on the facets chosen for emphasis, and nothing could be more misleading than the bifurcation of the history of modern art into Formalist and Expressionist limbs. It ought no longer to be necessary to point out that every valid artist is both. . . ."

This is not yet a defense of the social relevance of an abstract style. Mr. Rosenberg will not follow those critics like Focillon and Malraux who, by detaching paintings from fixed social, aesthetic, or metaphysical objectives, basically redefine the profession of painting. For then "the function of art is no longer to satisfy wants, including intellectual wants, but to serve as a stimulus to further creation." De Kooning, to whose work Mr. Rosenberg devotes two of his two most brilliant essays, is the hero of a new adventure in art. Rejecting the old ideologies, the artist will henceforth rely on the intuitions that arise in the course of his creative activity. He will seek a new direction amidst the "unalleviated confusion" of our epoch. "Painting," de Kooning is quoted as saying, "is a way of living. *That is where its form lies*" (my italics). This gnomic utterance Mr. Rosenberg interprets as meaning that while art derives from life, which is the general doctrine of Romanticism, in de Kooning's view "neither the artist nor the painting has a character that pre-exists their encounter. Here de Kooning turned inside out the Romantic image of art and the artist, as exemplified, for instance, by the paintings and the personal life of his friend Gorky; he would neither imitate masterpieces nor emulate the traditional image of the Artist." The argument now becomes somewhat solipsistic. "Since, for de Kooning, art must discover its form in the actuality of the artist's life, it cannot impose itself upon its practitioner as other professions do upon theirs. Art becomes a Way by which to avoid a Way. De Kooning discards all social roles in order to start with himself as he is, and all definitions of art in order to start with art as it might appear through him. By their mutual indetermination, art and the artist support each other's openness to the multiplicity of experience."

A pretty vague formula, one might suppose, for discovering the form of art. But by now the form has assumed the character of a fetish by which the artist's personality is ruled in the act of painting, "but which leaves him scattered when it departs"—rather like the grin of the vanishing cat in *Alice*, which remained some time after the rest of the animal had gone. With Alice we might comment that we have often seen "a cat without a grin, but never a grin without a cat." But on the basis of this vanishing trick Mr. Rosenberg affirms that de Kooning is "the foremost painter of the postwar world"—an opinion I am not inclined to challenge, but there must be something more to it than a fetish that de-

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parts to leave the artist "scattered."

Mr. Rosenberg does, indeed, give us some further clues. We are told that as far back as 1946 this foraging artist came to explore a point in art between Cubism and the late works of Cézanne—"an interval when painting intersected with Symbolist poetry and the methodological experiments of Mallarmé with form, analogy and chance." This was an intellectual focus "exactly suited to de Kooning's passion for an art of all-inclusive experience. At this juncture of form and self-examination he was able to forge a beginning of his own, loaded with both tradition and contemporaneity; all of his subsequent paintings, as well as a good deal of the art of others, arose out of this synthesis."

What Mr. Rosenberg is here saying, but not explicitly enough, is that experience only makes sense, or genius social significance, in so far as it achieves that perceptual coherence we call form, and that no art, lacking this coherence, can possibly have permanence. There is no such thing as an "aesthetics of impermanence," and the kind of excitement generated by "anything that lies at hand," is not even a stylistic device (a dignity which Mr. Rosenberg seems willing to concede to Pop Art but not to gagart).

All this is made clear in the essay on Barnett Newman, though mainly in Mr. Newman's own words. Obviously Newman is an artist to respect—"a man of taste, a man of controversy, a man of spiritual grandeur." But is it necessary to call him a man of taste? Or to describe his paintings as "impeccable decor"? Mr. Rosenberg is fully aware of Newman's importance—of his great intelligence. Newman has carried abstraction beyond nature and decoration to a new metaphysical significance. Unfortunately I do not know Newman's paintings well enough to add anything relevant to the artist's own notion of the abstract shape as "a living thing, a vehicle for an abstract thought-complex, a carrier of awesome feelings. . . ."—the abstract shape being therefore real. Mr. Rosenberg suggests that "the most extremely rational art of our century had been rationalized over the border of rationality and converted into a 'vehicle' for cosmic emotions." This makes Barnett Newman's paintings another variety of religious experience (perhaps another kind of fetish) but I prefer to regard them as a variety of visual experience, in spite of the metaphysical titles with which the artist himself sometimes endows them.

I draw to the end of my space and have not yet discussed some of the most interesting of the essays in this volume—those on Hans Hofmann (an artist almost unknown outside America, in spite of his European origin), Jasper Johns and Arshile Gorky. There are also essays on general subjects which make important new distinctions between internationalism and globalism, between Pop and Gag ("Pop is art in being gag; art gag, that is—but whether Gagart is art need not concern the historian once he has a bin to put it in.") But perhaps the most exciting essay in the whole volume is the one on "Art Movements" which caused something like a sensation when it was first published a short time ago in *The New Yorker*. Here Mr. Rosenberg acquires a philosophical stature rare among art crit-

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ics of our period. He has to deal with the apparent contradiction that exists today between the fact that art movements still make possible a continuity of style (a fact demonstrated, he points out, by the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition of "Americans 1963" where "every single item . . . bore the unmistakeable stamp of its origin in some worldwide art movement") and the no less evident fact that such "overt forms of solidarity . . . violate the passion for spontaneity and freedom inherent in modern creation." Spontaneity and freedom are, of course, illusions: "Never before this era of movements that deny themselves have so many utterly self-inspired personalities produced canvasses so difficult to tell apart; never have so many valid talents been so frequently menaced with extinction through burial in a category." But then comes the paradox: "In the shared current, individuality, no longer sought for itself, is heightened; one of the mysteries of the movements, as of the great 'periods' in the art of earlier times, is the creative assurance which they confer on previously commonplace talents. Far from constricting the artist's imagination, the movement magnetizes under the motions of his hand insights and feelings from outside the self and perhaps beyond the consciousness." It is his concern for the metaphysical concepts of "Time and Value," so evident in this particular essay, that distinguishes the work of Harold Rosenberg and places him in the tradition of Baudelaire's creative criticism.

HERBERT READ

A Mighty Story Retold

TOIL AND TROUBLE: A History of American Labor, by Thomas R. Brooks; foreword by A. H. Raskin. New York: Delacorte. xx + 300p. $6.00.

There are Civil War buffs who read and reread the chronicles of that immensely important time. There are labor buffs—and I am one—for whom Antietam was never as searing as Harlan County, which is merely a statement of fact and not meant to belittle the one or exaggerate the historic scale of the other. The cordwainers, the Knights, the Homestead strikers, the sit-in auto workers are the heroes I've lived with. Tell their story a hundred or a thousand times, and it is always fresh and inspiring. Mighty legends are like that, and the best of them are based in fact—as this one is.

How much toil and trouble went into building the huge (perhaps paunchy, but still troubled) labor giant we know. What began in feeble skirmishes for goals that seem modest now, and was nurtured in a sacrificing

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struggle, became the established and reasonably affluent union movement of today. It seems incredible that men and women had to give their lives to win a *ten-hour* day, or the right to strike, or union recognition—and more incredible that some of the same battles, though in different locations or contexts, have still to be fought over and over.

If Walter Reuther is today "accepted" by the auto magnates, it is worth recalling that just 28 years ago, at the overpass near the River Rouge, "Seven times they [Ford goons] raised me off the concrete and threw me down on it. They pinned my arms and shot short jabs to my face. I was punched and dragged by my feet to the stairway. I grabbed the railing and they wrenched me loose. I was thrown down the first flight of iron steps. Then they kicked me down the other flight of steps until I found myself on the ground where I was beaten and kicked." Thomas Brooks observes, "The beating did not do a bit of good. The UAW came back again and again."

It is unlikely that the UAW members in Detroit need worry about the terror of a beating from company hoodlums. The terror they face hits with a computer instead of a fist—and may ultimately hurt more. But make no mistake about it: there will still be simple, "classic" beatings, and workers, white and black, will be the victims. Sad to say, it is to be supposed that some of the people administering the beating may be union men, and the victims could be men wanting to be union men. And we will have to overcome all of this too.

Thomas Brooks has charted no new paths in labor history or interpretation. He has, however, presented an able and well-written guide. He has used his journalistic skills to good advantage in covering the entire range of American labor history from its beginnings to the problems and perplexities of Negro organization and automation today. There are minor flaws (Farrell Dobbs was not the "head of the tiny Socialist Workers Party" in 1934), but they do not detract at all from a work that is extraordinary for compressing so vast a subject into a manageable and readable book.

I know of no general labor history so accessible to the novice yet sufficiently compelling to hold the attention of the expert. The tone is sympathetic and optimistic; some will say too much so. There is little here about the current anxieties on the role of the labor movement. It rather assumes the role, while realistically contemplating the difficulties. More sophisticated readers may consider this a flaw, but I do not. Others have been, and will be, writing about these problems, and so they should. But it is good to have a book which situates our present dilemma in the rich fabric of *our* past.

EMANUEL GELTMAN

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SNCC THE NEW ABOLITIONISTS, by Howard Zinn. Boston: Beacon Press. 1964. $4.95.

"SNCC is Willie Shaw in jail in Belzoni, Mississippi!" So a veteran staff worker triumphantly ended a five-minute soliloquy during a SNCC conference last November. The inevitable applause burst out, to dissolve into the hand-clap of a freedom song for Willie, whose confinement kept him away from the meeting.

It had been called to discuss everything important about the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee—its new and expanded goals and program and the necessity for a more complicated structure. But could the tribute to Willie Shaw still define a group that in five years had grown from two who had no budget to 225 who would spend a million dollars in 1964? Here in the part of the country they had patented as their own—a little town in Mississippi—came SNCC staff from Northern and Southern offices and others whose work had been sufficiently intermittent not to merit them the $9.64 weekly SNCC salary. Among this last group—2 or 3 adult "advisors," a few lawyers, some SNCC "graduates" now back in school—was their chronicler, Howard Zinn.

Yet those who had read Zinn's *SNCC The New Abolitionists* could not have found it the kind of "history" (the quotes are Zinn's) from which people proverbially learn. For his book is a romantic account of the first four years of SNCC seen from up close and valuable chiefly because the author is close up. If it fails to touch the serious problems confronting both SNCC and the movement, it nevertheless follows the natural bent of its subject matter to capture what a perceptive participant (Zinn also taught history at Spellman, the Negro women's college in Atlanta, for seven years) could hardly have avoided.

Even allowing for the inherent romanticism of the subject, Zinn's book is something of an anachronism. It mostly treats the "nonviolent . . . direct action" SNCC which last summer barely existed, for by then the Mississippi staff voted not to test public accommodations under the new Civil Rights Act but to funnel its energy into politics (the Freedom Party), education (the freedom schools), and community work (voter registration, the community centers). The attitudes of the first SNCC workers, who created the SNCC legend, unavoidably assumes a dominating place in a book such as this. But what we do get not from Zinn is the sense of constant revision that is underway in SNCC. Zinn sometimes records crucial decisions—the jail-no-bail policy, for example—without making us understand the kind of growth and experience it took to reach them. Or he gives inadequate treatment to crucial turning points.

An important example is the decision of summer 1961 to emphasize voter registration over the more dra-

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matic action that had given birth to SNCC. That important decision deserves more than the single paragraph Zinn allots it, for it pointed the way toward the weighty goal of political power. Zinn leaves the impression that a "compromise" between "the 'direct action' people and the 'voter registration' people" gave SNCC "two arms." In fact, the one arm left the other behind, as direct action became an adjunct to the more significant voter registration work. This move toward a more political involvement in Southern life, coming from the creators of sit-in and cup-of-coffee, demonstrations, was a remarkable and mature change of policy. It was SNCC's unique contribution, since followed by all others active in the Southern movement. It was a coldly unromantic organizational decision deserving of analysis for its implications for SNCC and the entire Southern movement, even in a book inevitably focusing on the personal accounts, early hardships, and tenacious bravery that has given this country its first young heroes in decades.

Zinn's best chapter provides an analysis of the role of the Federal Government in the South. Although not a lawyer, Zinn does an excellent job of ferreting out imaginative legal remedies which could be used by the Justice Department if it wished to pursue the goal of civil rights with vigor.

Zinn's book is important as SNCC's first documentary. The author has expertly chosen his documents: I am grateful to have Julian Bond's poem, SNCC's first statement of purpose so motivated by love and nonviolence, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer's account of how she first came into the movement, and Zinn's own incisive discussion of the contagion of the SNCC experience. Zinn has learned much from his years in the complicated South, especially from Mama Dollie of Southwest Georgia, who, in a SNCC report recorded in the book, instructed: "Now, boy, you go to writing and write up a new day."

ELEANOR HOLMES

BRIEFER NOTICE

In the Eye of the Beholder

NOTES FROM CHINA, by Joan Robinson. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964. 38 pp.

This pamphlet by the distinguished English economist reached DISSENT with a letter from the *Monthly Review* requesting our appraisal. Our editor referred it to this reviewer as the only member of the DISSENT editorial board who was once in China (briefly; which qualifies him about equally with Miss Robinson who, according to the blurb, "makes no claim to be an expert on New China . . .")

The work is divided into two sections: Part one is the Chinese Point of View. Sample: "They [the Chinese] use the ideological style in public pronouncements, I suppose, because they think it is the right thing to do." Which, I suppose, is a perfectly acceptable reason, if only one thinks of it. After explaining about the Chinese attitudes toward Stalin, Khrushchev and the United States, plus a brief summary of the Tibet problem, Miss Robinson tackles India. Let our author speak for herself:

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> The Chinese story of the border question is easier to follow than the Indian version. When two great modern nations, liberated from Imperialist domination, meet at a frontier for the first time, a new situation is created. Many "problems left over by history" have to be settled. The Chinese side offered to negotiate and meanwhile proposed a demilitarized strip between the two armies, to prevent clashes from occurring. The Indian side would do nothing but reiterate their territorial claims, which, however far-fetched, they insisted on regarding as indisputable and sacrosanct. . . . By setting up advanced posts behind the Chinese positions they invited retaliation, and finally launched an offensive, in October 1962, to which the Chinese were obliged to reply in force.

As my grandmother used to say, if you'll believe that. . . . The Indian "version" is just as "easy" to follow; the problem, Miss Robinson, is to discover the truthful one.

In Part two, "The People's Communes," the author calmly acknowledges the total change (including liquidation and reorganization) which the communes have undergone during the past few years. They have of course emerged stronger than ever: they always do. To the seriously interested reader I suggest that he read the recent issues of that splendidly informed English publication, the *China Review*, published in London. Here he will learn what really motivated the Chinese regime in reorganizing the commune system.

Finally, the very last paragraph of Miss Robinson's work:

> There are no police on the communes, and the lads are learning rifle shooting in the militia. The Party, evidently, is not able to push the people anywhere that it cannot persuade them to go.

Reference is again made to my overworked grandmother. S. P.

The Wobblies

> REBEL VOICES: An I. W. W. anthology, edited, with introductions, by Joyce L. Kornbluh. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. xii-419 pp., oversize. Illus. $12.50.

What an absolutely splendid idea! To show the I.W.W. not in its present sadness, but in its grandeur. To record the Wobblies not merely as a page of history past, but to show them as they were, and in their own words. Here are Frank Little, Joe Hill, Ralph Chaplin, Arturo Giovannitti in the flesh of their words and deeds.

The sentiment, the valor, the comedy, and the lustiness—all of it is here, and well introduced. "The Rebel Girl" carries her flag on the cover of a song sheet; strikers' children in Lawrence, Mass., hold a sign, "Some day we shall remember exile!" Lumberjacks, bindle stiffs, Bill Haywood, Wesley Everest, the ineffable "Mr. Block"—warriors and fools. Troubadours of justice and dignity (as Civil Rights workers are today; interesting how song is so essential a part of both movements).

Why discuss or "review" this marvelous collection? The Wobblies, and their place in labor history may be a matter of dispute. This book is not. Get it. Give it. Turn its pages. Weep when you must. Glow when you can. Paul Bunyans of mining town or lumber camp, they acted larger than life. They were maudlin and militant, sometimes malicious—and sometimes

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mad. But they struck sparks, and ignited passions of comradeship that proudly echo in these pages.

Rebel Voices is a perfect gift for the young militant who needs to know there was a yesterday to get a perspective on tomorrow. E. G.

Recommended

The China Quarterly, January-March, 1965, $1.50 per copy, $6.00 per year. (Write to: The China Quarterly, Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London, W1, England.)

Warmest congratulations to *The China Quarterly*, which has just completed five years of publication. There is no finer magazine in the English language devoted to the problems of China and the Orient in general than this consistently interesting and informative review.

The contents of the anniversary number are particularly rich. In addition to the usual articles of specialized interest (Colin Clark on Economic Growth in China, a study of Population Statistics by Leo A. Orleans, etc.), there is a valuable section on China and the Bomb (articles by Morton Halperin, William R. Harris), and a more general section on Fifteen Years of Communist China with reflective articles by Benjamin Schwartz, A. M. Helpern and Geoffrey Hudson. Particularly fascinating is a brilliant *tour de force* by Ezra Vogel entitled "From Friendship to Comradeship: The Change in Personal Relations in Communist China."

The China Quarterly has succeeded in presenting critical scholarship in a badly neglected field. We recommend it to all DISSENT readers. S. P.

LETTERS

Objections

Editors:

Mr. Greenebaum is entitled to his opinion of my book: *The Rise of the Soviet Empire, A Study of Soviet Foreign Policy* [DISSENT, Winter 1965]. However, he takes advantage of an obvious printer's error (1934 for 1936) to argue unnecessarily that the Soviet Union could not have "guided" the Spanish Government in 1934, even though on the same page I begin quoting from Stalin's letter to Largo Caballero of December 1936, which provided that guidance. On his own account Mr. Greenebaum seems to condone Soviet methods in Eastern Europe, which hardly deserves comment, and he is inaccurate on Spanish developments prior to the civil war:

It is a mistake to believe that the Soviet Union did not show any interest in Spain before the VII Comintern Congress because, according to Mr. Greenebaum, it "did not even have diplomatic relations with Spain before 1936," and because "the popular front tactics were adopted by the Seventh World Congress in August 1935." The Azaña Government exchanged notes of recognition with the Soviet Union as early as 1933; ambassadors were appointed, although they did not take their posts until 1936. The main reason was Azaña's fall from power. But the Republican governments which followed Azaña did not withdraw Spain's recognition of the Soviet Union. In 1934, the Spanish delegate sponsored the Soviet Union's entry into the League of Nations. Even before the Azaña agreement Marcel Rosenberg, later Soviet Ambassador to Republican Spain, spent several weeks in Madrid. It seems unnecessary to speak of communist agents, though one should mention that Salvador de Madariaga regarded Alvarez del Vayo as "the chief communist agent inside the Socialist Party." According to Madariaga, Vayo's travels to Moscow began in 1930. Vittorio Codovilla, alias Medina, seems to have

continued on page 288

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Robert C. Tucker

STALIN, BUKHARIN, AND HISTORY AS CONSPIRACY

The following essay, a detailed examination of the 1938 Moscow Trial at which Nikolai Bukharin was the major defendant, is presented here not only for its intrinsic interest, but as a contribution to the discussion of totalitarianism which has been conducted recurrently in our pages. For those of our readers who recall from their own experience the storm of controversy raised by the Moscow Trials, Mr. Tucker's analysis will raise a variety of fascinating problems; for readers too young to remember the Trials, this account should be of special value in making them familiar with one of the major events of our time.

Robert Tucker is a Professor of Politics at Princeton University and director of its program in Russian studies; he is spending this year at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. He is especially well-known for his book, Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx.

Professor Tucker's essay forms the Introduction to a volume to be published this spring by Grosset & Dunlap, The Great Purge Trial, *edited by himself and Stephen F. Cohen. We wish to thank the publisher for permission to print the essay below.*
—EDITOR

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BUKHARIN: *It must be said for the sake of historical exactitude. . . .*

VYSHINSKY: *Don't trouble to speak for history, accused Bukharin. History will itself record what will be interesting for history.*—FROM THE TRIAL.

The court, like every human institution, is corruptible. Under certain conditions it comes to be employed for ends extraneous and alien to its proper primary purpose, which is to promote justice through the determination of guilt or innocence by the open examining and arguing of evidence. History has witnessed many examples of this misuse of the court in the form of political trials, in which governments exploit the courtroom for such aims as the defamation and defeat of their political opponents. A sub-category of the political trial is the show trial. Here the court proceedings become literally a dramatic performance in which not only the judge and the prosecutor but also the defendant or defendants play prearranged parts just as actors do on the stage. The crux of the show trial is the confession. The defendant plays the leading part by confessing in vivid detail to heinous crimes allegedly committed by himself and others as part of a great conspiracy. Such spectacles have antecedents going back to the medieval witchcraft trials in which the accused confessed to riding on broomsticks at night and passing through keyholes for their evil purposes. In our time totalitarian regimes have adopted and perfected the show trial. Indeed, the propensity to stage these political dramas in the courtroom is one of the telltale symptoms of that still imperfectly understood phenomenon of the modern age called "totalitarianism."

Political trials have taken place throughout the history of Soviet Russia, from Lenin's time to the present. The show trial, however, is one of the special hallmarks of the Stalin era and of Stalinism. It began with the Shakhty case, in which a number of Soviet and foreign engineers who had worked in the Donets coal basin confessed to participating in a conspiracy to commit crimes of industrial sabotage, or "wrecking," on orders from abroad. This trial was staged in 1928, the year of Stalin's emergence into ascendancy in the post-Lenin regime. Others soon followed: the trial of Professor Ramzin and the "Industrial Party" in 1930, the Menshevik trial in 1931, and the Metro-Vickers case in 1933. But all these were mere curtain-raisers for the series of major show trials during Stalin's Geat Purge of the Communist Party in 1936–1938. Then, after World War II, which brought a respite in this business, show trials were resumed on Stalin's orders and under the direction of Stalin's agents in a number of countries of Eastern Europe which had

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come under Soviet domination. And when Stalin died in March of 1953, he was in the midst of preparations for one more great and macabre show trial in Russia—the trial of a group of Kremlin doctors, most of them Jewish, on charges of conspiracy to commit medical murder of Soviet leaders on instructions from the Anglo-American intelligence services. This project may have been Stalin's own undoing, for it seems quite possible that he was put out of the way in order to prevent the doctors' trial—and the new party purge that would have accompanied it—from taking place. Since his death there have been no more show trials in the Soviet Union.

The Bolshevik Old Guard In the Prisoner's Dock

The three big purge trials staged in Moscow in 1936–1938 and widely known abroad simply as the "Moscow trials" hold a special place in this history. Whereas non-Party specialists, so-called "bourgeois remnants," had figured prominently in the earlier show trials, now the cast of the accused contained many of the great names of Bolshevism. In the prisoner's dock were most of the surviving leaders of the Bolshevik Old Guard, former People's Commissars in the Soviet government, former Soviet ambassadors who had served in major world capitals like Berlin and London, and, finally, a few obscure N.K.V.D. agents whose function in the trials was to assist the prosecution in special ways by blackening the principal accused. To see more clearly to what extent the Bolshevik Old Guard was on trial, it may be useful to recall that when Lenin towards the end of his life, considered the problem of choosing a successor in a letter that became known in the Party as his "Testament," he mentioned the names of six prominent party figures: Trotsky, Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, and Piatakov. One only—Stalin—was ruled out, for Lenin in a postscript to this letter directed the Party leadership to remove him from the post of General Secretary because of grave character defects that could, he said, prove of decisive significance. The other five, four in person and one in absentia, were leading defendants in the Moscow trials. Zinoviev and Kamenev headed the lists of sixteen accused in the trial of the "Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre" in August 1936. Piatakov, along with Karl Radek, former Secretary of the Communist International, were the leading names in the group of seventeen accused in the case of the "Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre" in January 1937. Bukharin, along with Alexei Rykov, Lenin's successor as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, led the list of twenty-one defendants in the trial of the "Anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" in March 1938. And Trotsky, although not physically present in the dock, was being tried in absentia. In fact he was the arch-criminal of Bolshevik political history according to the picture of events that unfolded in the course of the three Moscow trials. In passing sentence in the second trial, the court directed that he and his son be arrested and tried if apprehended on Soviet territory. This was an esoterically phrased death sentence and was carried out by the agent of Stalin who assassinated Trotsky in Mexico in 1940.

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The 1938 trial of the twenty-one, the transcript of which is presented here in slightly abbreviated form, has good claim to be considered "the great purge trial." Here the series of show trials staged during the Great Purge reached its climax. The major accusatory themes introduced in the earlier purge trials were restated and brought together with new charges, one of them being that Marshal Tukhachevsky and fellow Soviet military leaders who were executed in June 1937 after a secret trial, had headed a "military conspiratorial organization" linked with the larger conspiracy of which Bukharin and others had allegedly been ringleaders. The summing-up speech of the prosecutor, Vyshinsky, in the 1938 trial is the classic presentation of the ideology of the Moscow purge trials in its full-blown development, and the trial itself may justly be regarded as the supreme production in the Stalin genre of political show trial. It was likewise, as I shall argue below, the scene of an encounter between Vyshinsky and the chief defendant, Nikolai Bukharin, who endeavored by a technique of indirection to transform his trial into an anti-trial, an indictment and conviction of his accuser, Stalin.

Who Conceived, Directed The Great Purge?

The problem of the Moscow trials, and of this one in particular, takes on still greater interest at present owing to the post-Stalin Soviet disclosures concerning the Great Purge and the purge trials. De-Stalinization has meant, in no small part, a process of exoneration and rehabilitation—posthumous in very many cases—of purge victims. In this process much significant information has been brought to light. Khrushchev's secret report on Stalin to the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, although not published inside the Soviet Union to this day, was nevertheless the fountainhead of an official Soivet literature about the purges that went on accumulating during the years of Khrushchev's ascendancy and has continued to flow even after his fall from power in October 1964. Although it still leaves many questions unsolved or incompletely answered, this body of Soviet material provides a basis not only for a fresh look at the trials and purges themselves but also for a critical reexamination of the ideas and assumptions underlying the voluminous Western literature on this subject, most of which was produced in the Stalin era.

A crucially important point that emerges from the post-Stalin Soviet revelations about the Great Purge is that Stalin personally conceived, initiated, and directed the entire process, including the planning, preparation, and actual conduct of the purge trials. It is true that testimony to the same effect had reached us from other sources much earlier. Stalin had been pictured as director-general of the purges and trials by high-ranking Soviet police officials with firsthand knowledge of the situation who escaped to the West at the time and published their stories.[1] However, this view of the matter, with all its profound implications, somehow failed to

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1 See in particular W. G. Krivitsky: *In Stalin's Secret Service* (New York: Harper, 1939) and Alexander Orlov: *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes* (New York: Random House, 1953).

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make the requisite deep impression upon the Western mind. Nor was it understood by the Soviet public and intelligentsia, who had no access to such sources of information. In memoirs published long after Stalin's death the writer Ilya Ehrenburg recalls what went on in the minds of Soviet intellectuals during the Great Purge: "We thought (perhaps we wanted to think) that Stalin knew nothing about the senseless violence committed against the Communists, against the Soviet intelligentsia. Meyerhold said: 'They conceal it from Stalin.' One night . . . I met Boris Pasternak in Lavrushensky lane; he waved his arms about as he stood between the snowdrifts: 'If only someone would tell Stalin about it.' "[2] Many purge victims reasoned similarly. Some addressed anguished appeals to Stalin from N.K.V.D. cells, protesting their innocence. General Yakir, one of those arrested in 1937 in the Tukhachevsky case, is said to have shouted at the moment he was shot: "Long live the Party, long live Stalin!" Khrushchev, who related this story at the Twenty-second Party Congress in 1961, explains: "He thought that enemies had infiltrated the organs of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs."[3] Among some political prisoners in concentration camps this belief took the form of a theory that fascists had wormed their way into positions of power under Stalin. Another widely held belief was that the events of the time were the work of the N.K.V.D. chief, Yezhov; in fact, the climax of the Great Purge in 1937–1938 became known in Russia as the *Yezhovshchina,* or "time of Yezhov."

Written, Directed, and Produced by Stalin

In reality it was the time of Stalin. The picture given earlier in the accounts of N.K.V.D. defectors such as Krivitsky and Orlov has been fully and convincingly confirmed by official Soviet sources of the post-Stalin period. The man whom many believed to be incompletely informed about the Great Purge was in fact running it. The man to whom some appealed for justice over the head of the N.K.V.D. was in fact directing all its activity. In his secret report to the Twentieth Party Congress, Khrushchev tells, for example, how Yezhov would send to Stalin for his approval lists of persons in N.K.V.D. custody with proposed sentences indicated upon them. "In 1937–1938," he says, "383 such lists containing the names of many thousands of Party, Soviet, Komsomol, Army and economic workers were sent to Stalin. He approved these lists."[4] He tells us further that Stalin rather than Yezhov made all the decisions concerning arrests of high party leaders, many of whom were arrested without the prosecutor's knowledge. "In such a situation," Khrushchev goes on, "there is no need for any sanction, for what sort of a sanction could there be when Stalin decided everything? He was the

2 *Memoirs: 1921–1941,* translated by T. Shebunina in collaboration with Y. Kapp (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 426–427.

3 *Documents of the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU* (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1961), Vol. I, p. 228.

4 This and all further references to Khrushchev's secret report are based on the text as originally printed in *The New York Times* for June 5, 1956 and reprinted in *The Crimes of the Stalin Era* (New York: *The New Leader,* 1956), with annotations by Boris I. Nicolaevsky.

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chief prosecutor in these cases. Stalin not only agreed to, but on his own initiative issued, arrest orders." Naturally, Stalin could not have engineered the Great Purge without the zealous and capable assistance of many others, among whom his police chiefs, Yagoda and Yezhov, deserve special mention. But these men as well as their subordinates were essentially Stalin's accomplices and tools, not independent figures acting in their own right. Thus Yagoda, who had assisted Stalin in preparing the 1936 trial, was then removed (to become a defendant himself in the 1938 trial) and replaced by Yezhov, who in turn was eliminated after serving as Stalin's right-hand man at the height of the reign of terror.

Why did so many Russians, including some high-ranking victims of the purge, fail to understand that Stalin was the moving spirit and director of the whole business? Ehrenburg probably gives part of the answer when he speaks of their wish to believe otherwise. We must also take account of the traditional Russian habit of absolving the Tsar of personal responsibility for flagrant injustices, which were thought to be the work of evil ministers who kept the Tsar in ignorance of the people's sufferings. But a further and crucial part of the explanation is that Stalin contrived to hold himself aloof and in the background so that people would not understand his true role in the events of the time. His activity as stage manager of these events was carried on behind the scenes and was known only to a few, most of whom perished before the end. Even in the fateful Central Committee session of March 3–5, 1937, during which Stalin's two speeches were signals for intensification of the Great Purge as it entered the final period, he carefully posed as a force for moderation by cautioning in conclusion against "a heartless attitude toward people" and castigating unnamed Party leaders who were expelling party members with reckless abandon and "think it a mere bagatelle to expel thousands and tens of thousands of people from the Party."[5] By such means Stalin successfully carried out one of the greatest acts of deliberate deception in modern political history. That is, he contrived to make the time of Stalin go down in Russian history as the "time of Yezhov."

As we re-examine the problem of the Moscow show trials, then, it is essential to bear in mind that these were basically one-man shows of which Stalin himself was organizer, chief producer, and stage manager as well as an appreciative spectator from a darkened room at the rear of the Hall of Columns, where the trials were held. Vyshinsky spoke for the prosecution, but we must understand that he spoke with the voice of Stalin. Although he did not claim personal authorship, Stalin was the chief playwright of the case of the "Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" and the other cases enacted in the show trials.

5 Joseph Stalin: *Mastering Bolshevism* (New York: New Century Publishers, 1946), p. 45.

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"We have internal enemies. We have external enemies. This, comrades, must not be forgotten for a single moment." This was Stalin's "general conclusion" in a major speech of April 1928 on the state of the Soviet Union. It flowed from his analysis of the Shakhty case, which he described as an economic counter-revolution plotted by bourgeois experts who "banded together in a secret group and were receiving money for sabotage purposes from former owners now living abroad and from counter-revolutionary anti-Soviet capitalist organizations in the West."[6] Here, in embryo, was the ideology of the later purge trials as elaborated by Vyshinsky with the assistance of the confessing defendants. Here was the *Weltanschauung* of those trials.

The world of the Moscow trials is one of long-drawn-out conspiratorial cold war waged for the purpose of destroying the Soviet state and the Revolution it embodies. It is a world dominated by the machinations of external and especially internal "enemies" who are diabolically cunning as well as totally vicious and evil. Abroad they may at times operate in the open, although their chief arm is the secretly functioning intelligence services of the major powers. But inside the Soviet Union they do all their nefarious work by stealthy and devious means, practicing deception as their primary technique of political warfare. They wear "masks" of loyal citizens and prominent party and government leaders until they are finally exposed as persons who, in the words of Vyshinsky's summing-up speech in the Bukharin trial, "spent the whole of their lives behind masks. . . ." And these internal enemies are no less a deadly danger to the Soviet state for the fact that they represent, in actual numbers, only a small minority of the total population. For, as Stalin explained in the March 1937 Central Committee meeting, "it does not at all need a big number of people to do harm and to cause damage. . . . Thousands of people are required to build a big railway bridge, but a few people are sufficient to blow it up. Tens and hundreds of such examples could be quoted. Consequently, we must not comfort ourselves with the fact that we are many, while they, the Trotskyite wreckers, are few."[7]

In this same speech Stalin represent- of the above-mentioned world-view as being "what Leninism teaches us," and Vyshinsky echoed the point in the 1938 summing-up speech. Though Stalin, in all probability, seriously believed this, he was mistaken. Lenin had provided a foundation for this world-view in his concept of an international class war between a "socialism" embodied in the Soviet Republic and a "capitalism" dominant in the rest of the world, which represented therefore a hostile "capitalist encirclement." But Stalin filled these old Leninist concepts with a new, distinctively Stalinist content, which found expression in the materials of the Moscow purge trials. The chief distinctive feature was the quite un-Leninist emphasis upon *conspiracy* as the hallmark of the present epoch. Although it did not exclude un-

6 J. V. Stalin: *Works* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1954), Vol. XI, p. 57.

7 *Mastering Bolshevism*, pp. 26–27.

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derhanded methods, the original Bolshevik or Leninist ideology did not view the international class war as a conflict being waged by essentially conspiratorial means. Nor did it see this conflict as centering in the hostile activities of masked enemies operating inside Soviet society. In Stalinism the Leninist notion of an international class war turns into the notion of a conspiratorial cold war against the Soviet Union. The final and finished expresion of this conspiratorial interpretation of contemporary history is to be found in the pages of the trial transcript here presented.

Opposition Programs And Party Conflicts

As we examine it we must bear in mind that the history of Lenin's party from its founding early in the century to the end of the 1920's was characterized by factional struggles and opposition movements supporting programs of Party policy that were at times openly debated. Shortly following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, for example, Bukharin, one of the outstanding leaders and theoreticians of the Party, headed a "Left Communist" opposition that favored revolutionary war as against Lenin's policy of accepting the annexationist peace dictated by the German government to Trotsky at Brest-Litovsk. Other opposition movements rose and fell in the Party during the turbulent first years of its rule, and factionalism flourished in spite of the formal prohibition of it in the resolution on Party unity adopted by the Tenth Party Congress in 1921. With Lenin's death the Party's inner conflicts intensified. In the mid-1920's the Trotskyite or "Left Opposition," joined in 1926 by Stalin's former allies Zinoviev and Kamenev, vainly opposed its program of rapid industrialization and "permanent revolution" to the platform of "socialism in one country." Though the latter became identified with Stalin, it originated with a group of "Right Communists" headed by Bukharin, who had now shifted to a moderate position, Alexei Rykov, and the trade-union leader Mikhail Tomsky. To these men "socialism in one country" meant a program of gradual industrialization without forcible measures to collectivize the Russian peasantry, continual alleviation of the harsher aspects of the dictatorship, and in foreign affairs a tendency to de-emphasize the policy of fomenting revolution in Europe in favor of efforts to cement diplomatic ties with and secure economic credits from the Western democracies.[8] Having taken over the slogan of "socialism in one country" from this source and used it with signal success against the Left Opposition, Stalin subsequently gave it an interpretation very different from that of the right-wing leaders, whose position was stigmatized at the end of the 1920's as the "Right Opposition." To Stalin "socialism in one country" meant a strengthening of the dictatorship and an orientation of the nation's economy towards preparation for total war. This was to be achieved through breakneck industrialization, emphasiz-

8 For an account of the Right Opposition see Robert V. Daniels: *The Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), Chapter 13. A full-scale treatment of the development of the views of the right-wing group in the 1920's will be presented in a forthcoming study by Stephen F. Cohen: *Bukharin and the Politics of Right Communism: 1923–1929.*

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ing heavy industry and arms production, and exploitation of peasant labor by means of coercive collectivization. Stalin's program went into effect during the First Five-Year Plan (1928–1933) at ghastly cost to the country in strain, dislocation, privation, sacrifice, and suffering.

"To Choose One's Victim . . ."

The right-wing leaders were opposed in principle to the Stalinist "general line" and fought it as hard and as long as they could. Bukharin, their foremost theorist and the soul of the Right Opposition, bore the brunt of the fight. In the course of it he made a move to secure support from Stalin's old left-wing opponents Zinoviev and Kamenev. On July 11, 1928, in an interview with Kamenev later published abroad by the Trotskyites, Bukharin said that his group considered Stalin's line fatal to the Revolution. Stalin, he said, was leading the country to famine, ruin, and a police regime with his program of exacting "tribute" from the peasantry for forced industrialization, and was ideologically justifying this line with an argument of "idiotic illiteracy" to the effect that resistance and therewith internal class conflict must grow as socialism grows. After comparing Stalin with Genghis Khan, Bukharin said that conditions were ripening in the Central Committee for dismissing Stalin but were not yet fully ripe. Meanwhile Stalin, who was at bottom interested only in power, was determined to strangle the opposition. "Stalin knows only vengeance," Bukharin declared. "We must remember his theory of sweet revenge." This was a reference to something Stalin had said one summer night in 1923 to Kamanev and Dzerzhinsky: "To choose one's victim, to prepare one's plans minutely, to slake an implacable vengeance, and then to go to bed. . . . There is nothing sweeter in the world."[9] Publication of this interview proved extremely damaging to Bukharin and the Right Opposition.

At the beginning of 1929 he was still editor of *Pravda,* and he made a final open attempt to oppose Stalin's course in an article on "Lenin's Political Testament" published in *Pravda* on January 21, the fifth anniversary of Lenin's death. He argued carefully and convincingly here that the essence of Lenin's final position was that the building of a socialist system in Russia should be achieved through a long process of *"peaceful organization and cultural work"* (Lenin's words, italics by Bukharin) and specifically without coercion of the peasantry. In short, it was Lenin's political testament, according to Bukharin's reading, that socialism could and should be built without an intensified class struggle in Soviet society and without such a violent "third revolution" as was plainly implicit in the Stalin program. In the following month matters came to a head in a stormy session of the Politburo during which the right-wing leaders attacked Stalin for one-man decisions and argued that his collectivization program was leading to what Bukharin called "military-feudal exploitation of the peasants."[10] From this

9 Boris Souvarine, *Stalin: A Critical Survey of Bolshevism* (New York: Alliance Book Corporation, 1939), pp. 483–485.

10 For an account of this meeting see Leonard Schapiro: *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union.* (New York: Random House, 1959), p. 373.

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point on the Right Opposition went down to defeat. Later in 1929 Bukharin was expelled from the Politburo and dismissed from his positions as editor of *Pravda* and member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. Rykov was dismissed as Premier and Tomsky was removed from leadership of the trade unions. The three right-wing leaders publicly renounced their "deviation" in November, and open opposition came to an end. Earlier that year, it will be recalled, Trotsky had been deported from the country.

From Open to "Aesopian" Opposition—Then None

Though open opposition ceased, Bukharin, an exceedingly adroit thinker and talented writer, continued on occasion to convey criticism of Stalin by a technique of indirection, or double-talk, that was known among the older revolutionaries who had developed it under Tsarist censorship conditions, as "Aesopian language." Thus in a *Pravda* article of March 7, 1930, which was ostensibly a long polemic against the papacy in general and Pope Pius in particular for his newly published encyclical on communism, Bukharin skillfully conveyed that "popes" meant Stalin and his followers, "Jesuit order" the Stalinist N.K.V.D., "heresy" the opposition viewpoint, and so on. Of special political significance was a passage that he quoted here from a book on Church history, saying: "If they (the popes, N. Bukharin) kill the soul, then why have they a right to call themselves successors of Christ? Where is the similarity of their institutions? Christ, speaking to Peter, once said: Feed my sheep! But what do the popes do? Do they not lead the Christians, *completely pillaged by papal plundering, to starvation? Do they not fleece their sheep continually, and cut into their flesh whilst shearing them?*" (Italics by Bukharin.) The "Aesopian" message here was that Stalin, who was pillaging the peasantry and leading the people to starvation with the catastrophic forced collectivization campaign then in progress, had thereby turned against the true heritage of Bolshevism as embodied in Lenin's political testament. That others in the party shared this view of the events of the time is shown by the clandestine circulation of the so-called "Riutin platform," in which a former follower of Bukharin bitterly assailed Stalin for his policies and called for his removal. By the time of the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934, however, the situation in the country had eased. Such prominent former oppositionists as Bukharin, Rykov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Piatakov, and Radek appeared on the platform to emphasize their approval of the general line and pay tribute to Stalin's leadership in carrying it out. Bukharin, though demoted from full to candidate membership in the Party Central Committee after the Congress, was appointed editor of *Izvestia*, a position he held until his arrest early in 1937.

Meanwhile there was one last episode of opposition to Stalin on the part of Bukharin. In the first of the great show trials, the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial of August 1936, several defendants named Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky (the last-named committed suicide at this time) as co-participants in the criminal activities to which they confessed. A press campaign of vilifica-

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tion of the former right-wing leaders ensued, and in early September a meeting was reportedly called in the Central Committee to consider their expulsion from the party.[11] Presenting Stalin's case against them, Yezhov at this meeting moved for the expulsion of Bukharin and Rykov on the ground that they, along with Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev, had been involved since 1918 in a "monstrous conspiracy" in the course of which they had become agents of the Gestapo and were even now plotting, in concert with the Trotskyites, a *coup d'état*. Replying in his own defense, Bukharin agreed that a monstrous conspiracy was being carried out against the Party and state in the Soviet Union. But its leaders, he declared, were Stalin and Yezhov, who were plotting and acting to change the Bolshevik Party regime inherited from Lenin into an N.K.V.D. regime in which Stalin would enjoy unlimited personal power. He contended that the elimination of himself and Rykov was a necessary part of this conspiratorial plan and that what was now being decided, therefore, was not the "Bukharin question" but the fate of the country. Stalin's supporters in the Politburo supported the Yezhov motion in the ensuing discussion; others did not. When the vote was taken, the motion was supported by less than a third of the Central Committee members present. Stalin indicated his acceptance of the adverse decision, and a statement was published in *Pravda* on September 10 announcing that the case against Bukharin and Rykov was being closed because investigation had not established judicial bases for legal proceedings against them. Stalin meanwhile went on maneuvering. The Tukhachevsky military group, whose representatives in the Central Committee had supported the pro-Bukharin majority, were arrested and executed in June 1937. In 1937–1938, according to data in Khrushchev's secret report, 98 members and candidates of the Central Committee, or 70 per cent of the total, were arrested and shot. It seems very likely that the physical liquidation of the overwhelming majority of this highest ruling body in the Soviet system was connected at least in part with the events just recounted. In any event, the way was now cleared for the trial of Bukharin and Rykov, which opened in March 1938.

Bending History Into "Conspiracy"

The case developed in this trial was an elaboration of the "monstrous conspiracy" charge made against Bukharin and Rykov in the reported secret Party meeting in 1936. It pictured the erstwhile Left and Right oppositions as two interconnected prongs of a conspiracy of many years standing to destroy the Revolution and the Lenin-Stalin regime. It was held that in 1918 Bukharin and his group of Left Communists and Trotsky and his group

11 There was no official announcement of this meeting. An account appears in Uralov (pseudonym of Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov, a Party official and historian then living in the U.S.S.R.): *The Reign of Stalin* (London: Bodley Head, 1953), pp. 43–47. Most Western specialists accept this account as on the whole trustworthy, although there is some dispute about the particulars, e.g., whether the reported meeting was a full plenary session as reported by Avtorkhanov or a more informal meeting of high-ranking persons within the Central Committee.

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had plotted to frustrate the Brest-Litovsk peace, overthrow the Soviet government, arrest and murder Lenin and Stalin, and form a new government. Bukharin had helped inspire the terrorist attempt on Lenin's life by Dora Kaplan in August 1918. Trotsky had entered the service of the German intelligence in 1921. Bukharin and Rykov had long been connected with foreign intelligence services through accomplices, and Krestinsky, Rosengoltz, and Rakovsky had been agents of foreign powers since the early 1920's. Both Trotskyite and Right oppositions had from the start been subversive movements motivated by criminal anti-Soviet aims rather than genuine oppositionist convictions. In 1932–1933, when the futility of further open opposition activity was clear, they had formed, on instructions of foreign intelligence services, a conspiratorial group called "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites," on behalf of which Trotsky had negotiated an agreement with Nazi Germany looking to the overthrow of the Soviet government and the defeat and dismemberment of the U.S.S.R. in a coming war. The conspirators also had entered into a secret agreement with Japan under which she would render armed assistance in overthrowing the Soviet government and later be recompensed with the Maritime Region in the Soviet Far East. In preparation for functioning as a fifth column and opening the front in time of war, the conspiracy had engaged in espionage, wrecking activities, incitement of peasant risings, and the planning or execution of terrorist acts against Soviet leaders. The wrecking activities, aimed both at undermining the economy and at stirring up anti-Soviet feeling which would hamper the defense effort in time of war, included deliberate mismanagement of the ruble and state savings banks by Finance Commissar Grinko, deliberate infecting of pigs with the plague through efforts of Agriculture Commissar Chernov, and the mixing of glass and nails into butter by arrangement of the head of the consumer cooperatives, Zelensky. The terrorist acts had included the assassination of the Leningrad Party leader Sergei Kirov in 1934, and the medical murder of two other prominent Party leaders, Kuibyshev and Menzhinsky, and of Maxim Gorky and his son. The medical murders had been committed by well-known Soviet doctors on orders of the N.K.V.D. chief, Yagoda, who had made a deep study of the history of murder by poisoning and had planned, among other crimes, to murder Yezhov by poisoning the air in his office with mercury dissolved in an acid. Another and key unfulfilled aim of the conspirators had been the murder of Stalin.

How true or false was this conspiratorial view of Soviet history? It contained some sheer fabrications, such as the allegations about the espionage connections of the accused and their collaboration with Nazi Germany and Japan. But not everything falls in this category. Some actual facts have been mentioned in the foregoing summary, and many more appear in the voluminous trial proceedings themselves. There was, as we have seen, a real history of opposition activity, a "Riutin platform," a 1928 anti-Salin talk between Bukharin and Kamenev, and so on. Krestinsky, who was Soviet ambassador in Berlin in the 1920's, un-

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doubtedly had conversations with German military men. Bukharin did, as mentioned in his testimony and final statement, have meetings in Paris early in 1936 with the well-known scholar and Menshevik leader Boris Nicolaevsky. Some criminal acts mentioned in the trial actually occurred. Dora Kaplan did make an attempt on Lenin's life, Sergei Kirov was in fact assassinated, and it may be, although this is not definitely confirmed, that Gorky was murdered by poisoning. It is true that Yagoda, a one-time pharmacist, was knowledgeable in the history of murder by poisoning. Some peasant outbreaks did occur in the early 1930's and there was great loss of livestock then. Some savings banks were mismanaged, timber-floating operations were disorganized, the supply of school exercise books was in places interrupted, the sowing of vegetables was misplanned, and there were various goods shortages—facts which are mentioned in the trial—and these and like situations did create much popular discontent. It may even be that nails and glass had in places turned up in Soviet butter.

On the other hand, these real facts and incidents are all falsified in the manner in which they were presented at the trial. For they did not occur as elements in a vast anti-Soviet conspiracy. Thus Bukharin's opposition to Lenin over Brest-Litovsk harbored no anti-Lenin conspiratorial designs, and nothing in the world was more foreign to his makeup than a desire to harm Lenin. Although he came to loathe Stalin and wished it were possible to unseat him from power, he had not been involved in a terrorist plot to accomplish this. He met with Nicolaevsky in Paris in 1936 not for conspiratorial anti-Soviet purposes but in order to negotiate, on behalf of the Communist Party, for purchase of the Marx-Engels archives from the German Social Democratic Party. The peasant disturbances were a reaction to forced collectivization, not a product of right-wing plotting, and livestock was lost in great numbers because peasants slaughtered their animals in resistance to collectivization. The shortages, disruptions of supply, and general disorganization in the land were generated by Stalin's convulsive "third revolution" rather than by deliberate "wrecking" activity in connection with a conspiracy. Finally, the murder of Kirov was not organized by the accused but rather, it very strongly appears, by Stalin, who sought thereby both to remove a potential rival and to create a pretext for launching the Great Purge.

Fiction Carefully Blended With Falsified Facts

What unfolds before us in the trial, then, is a gigantic texture of fantasy into which bits and pieces of falsified real history have been woven along with outright fiction. It forms an elaborate unified system in the sense that everything hangs together in a coherent, logical, and internally, self-consistent whole. The master theme running through it all and giving it a dramatic unity is the great anti-Soviet conspiracy. It furnishes the motivation and therewith the explanation for hundreds of events and incidents spoken of in the trial, many of which really happened. Now this scheme bears a definite and, as I shall suggest further on, understandable resemblance to textbook descriptions of a

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paranoid delusional system. Authorities describe a paranoid system as an intricate, schematized, and logically elaborated structure with a "central delusional theme" involving a hostile plot of which the person concerned is an intended victim. The plot is ascribed to a "paranoid pseudo-community," which is "an imaginary organization, composed of real and imagined persons, whom the patient represents as united for the purpose of carrying out some action upon him."[12]

That the conspiratorial master theme in the case of the "Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" was fictional is no longer subject to dispute. The great anti-Soviet conspiracy around which the whole case is organized was quite imaginary. The "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" never existed as an organized conspiratorial group seeking to undermine the Soviet state and overthrow the Stalin government. As Bukharin correctly mentioned in his final statement, "the accused in this dock are not a group" and insofar as the "Bloc" actually existed it did so as a venture in back-stage opposition politics undertaken at the time of his conversation with Kamenev in 1928. Since that was prior to Hitler's rise to power, he went on, the group could not possibly have been formed on instruction of fascist intelligence services. That is, the basic conspiracy charge, relating to the alleged dealings of the accused with the Axis governments, was false. Bukharin's denial on this key point has been fully borne out. Had there been any foundation at all for the charge that the accused collaborated with the Nazis and Japanese, the captured archives of the defeated Axis powers and the memories of their surviving leaders should have furnished evidence of this collaboration. But they have not.[13]

The non-existence of the great counter-revolutionary conspiracy has been admitted by the Soviet regime since Stalin's death. A special commission of inquiry appointed by the Party Central Committee to look into the events of 1937–1938 found "nothing tangible" at the bottom of the treason

12 Norman Cameron: "Paranoid Conditions and Paranoia," in *American Handbook of Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1959), p. 519. Dr. Cameron adds that the malevolent pseudo-community may be conceived as a gang of international spies, a secret police force, or a racial or religious group. The official handbook of the American Psychiatric Association describes paranoia as "characterized by an intricate, complex, and slowly developing paranoid system, often logically elaborated after a false interpretation of an actual occurrence," and adds: "The paranoid system is particularly isolated from much of the normal stream of consciousness, without hallucinations and with relative intactness and preservation of the remainder of the personality, in spite of a chronic and prolonged course" (*Mental Disorders:* American Psychiatric Association, Washington, D.C.: 1952, p. 28).

13 On this point Isaac Deutscher writes: "Among all the documents of the Nuremberg trial of the Nazi leaders not a single one contains as much as a hint of the alleged Nazi fifth column in the Soviet Government and army. Could there be a more eloquent refutation of the purge trials than that amazing gap in the otherwise abundant evidence of Hitler's preparations for the war?" (*Stalin: A Political Biography*, New York: Vintage Books, 1960, p. 379 n.). Deutscher does suggest, however, that Marshal Tukhachevsky and his military associates were planning a *coup d'etat* against Stalin, entirely on their own. It must be said that no evidence has appeared to support this hypothesis.

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charges brought against so many thousands of Party members at that time. This was reported by Khrushchev in his secret speech to the Twentieth Party Congress. He says here that "when the cases of some of these so-called 'spies' and 'saboteurs' were examined, it was found that all their cases were fabricated." And further: "Many thousands of honest and innocent Communists have died as a result of this monstrous falsification of such 'cases.' " To illustrate the methods by which N.K.V.D. officials "manufactured various fictitious 'anti-Soviet centers' and 'blocs' " and "fabricated 'anti-Soviet plots,' " he cites the case of a survivor, one Rozenblum, who told the commission how, after being subjected to terrible torture, he was brought before the N.K.V.D. investigator Zakovsky. The latter informed him that the N.K.V.D. would work out the legend for his case: " 'You yourself,' said Zakovsky, 'will not need to invent anything. The N.K.V.D. will prepare for you a ready outline for every branch of the center; you will have to study it carefully and remember well all the questions and answers which the Court might ask. This case will be ready in four-five months, or perhaps a half year. During all this time you will be preparing yourself. . . . Your future will depend on how the trial goes and on its results.' " This description, incidentally, accords with the accounts of surviving victims of the purge who found their way to the West and published stories of their experiences.

Why, Then, Did They Confess?

If the cases of so many thousands of "honest and innocent Communists" were fabricated, if mythical "anti-Soviet centers," "blocs," and "plots" were invented in full detail by expert N.K.V.D. political playwrights for acting out by prisoners in trials, then obviously the central super-conspiracy, with which all the lesser conspiratorial centers around the country were alleged to be linked, was similarly a fabrication. The Soviet regime had admitted this, although unfortunately it has not yet done so in a wholly unambiguous and comprehensive manner. Marshal Tukhachevsky and his fellow officers of the "military conspiratorial group" mentioned in the Bukharin trial are now declared to have been entirely innocent, patriotic Soviet citizens and devoted Party members done to death on trumped-up treason charges. As of this writing (December 1964) several of the defendants in the Bukharin trial, including Krestinsky, Grinko, and Ikramov, have been similarly rehabilitated, which of course shatters the entire case, since their testimony interlocks at so many points with that of the other defendants. These others, particularly Bukharin and Rykov, have not yet been restored to places of honor in the history of the Party. It is notable, however, that the criminal conspiracy charges against Bukharin and Rykov have already been dismissed publicly. Speaking at a conference of Soviet historians late in 1962, P. N. Pospelov, director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, declared that "neither Bukharin nor Rykov of course were spies or terrorists."[14]

14 *Vsesoiuznoe soveshchanie o merakh uluchsheniia podgotovki nauchno-pedagogicheskikh kadrov po istoricheskim naukam* (Moscow, 1964), p. 298.

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Since the Moscow trials a voluminous literature has grown up in the West on the question of why the defendants confessed. Certain points regarding the motives of Bukharin, who seems to have been something of a special case, will be made below. Here I should like simply to point out that Soviet post-Stalin disclosures corroborate earlier reports by N.K.V.D. defectors and purge victims who later escaped to the West that torture and extreme pressure, including threats of doing harm to loved ones, were employed. In the secret report to the Twentieth Congress Khrushchev cites a coded telegram sent out by Stalin to the heads of N.K.V.D. organizations and other officials on January 20, 1939, saying that methods of "physical pressure" in N.K.V.D. practice, which had been permissible from 1937 on, should continue to be applied "obligatorily" to "known and obstinate enemies of the people as a method both justifiable and appropriate." Khrushchev states further: "Confessions of guilt of many arrested and charged with enemy activity were gained with the help of cruel and inhuman tortures." This statement is borne out by testimony from a variety of sources. The defendants confessed because they were forced to.

3

The Moscow trials understandably aroused enormous interest in the West. In the discussion that started then and went on for a good many years, two questions were asked most insistently and discussed at greatest length: Were they guilty? Why did they confess? Inside Russia, on the other hand, attention focused upon a different question: Why the trials, and why the Great Purge as a whole? Ehrenburg recalls in his memoirs: "I realized that people were being accused of crimes which they had not and could not have committed, and I asked myself and others: why, what for? No one could give me an answer. We were completely at sea."[15] According to Beck and Godin, two purge victims who lived to write a book about it, the "enemies of the people" were asking the very same questions during their interrogation period and afterwards in the camps: "There was no question that excited the prisoners so much as that which the reader must already have asked himself time and again. 'Why? What for?' The question was endlessly argued. . . . The words 'Why? What for?' were to be found scratched with smuggled bits of broken glass on the inside walls of the 'black raven,' and the coaches of the prison trains. 'Why? What for?' "[16]

These Russians were asking the real main question, and it is one that scholars need to reopen in the light of the new information and better perspective that we now possess on the events of the time. One of the tendencies in Western writings has been to answer it by reference to postulated functional needs of the Soviet system as a form of "totalitarianism." Periodical blood purges, accompanied by such events as the Moscow show trials, have

15 *Op. cit.*, p. 426.

16 F. Beck and W. Godin: *Russian Purge and the Extraction of Confession* (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p. 215.

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been viewed as a necessity or deep-lying tendency of totalitarianism *as a system*. This way of thinking is based upon an image of totalitarianism, in whatever form, as a fundamentally impersonal phenomenon, a system in which virtually all, including the highest functionaries of the state, are essentially cogs in a machine. Miss Hannah Arendt, whose important writings on totalitarianism have been one of the sources of this image, has suggested, for example, that blood purges such as those of the Stalin era, quite unlike the Party purges in the early years of the Russian Revolution, served as an "instrument of permanent instability."[17] Such instability, in turn, is treated as a functional requisite of totalitarianism as a system.

The Great Purge And Soviet Society

A different approach seem to be suggested by all that we now know. First, the phenomena in question were not at all functional necessities of the Soviet system. On the contrary, the system would have been better off and far more equipped to meet the coming test of total war had there been no Great Purge, which was, in effect, a great wrecking operation in Soviet society. We have testimony from the lips of no less an authority than Khrushchev that the Soviet order, far from requiring the Great Purge, was hard put to survive it. "Only because our party has at its disposal such great moral-political strength," he says in the secret report, "was it possible to survive the diffcult events in 1937–1938 and to educate new cadres. There is, however, no doubt that our march forward toward socialism and toward the preparation for the country's defense would have been much more successful were it not for the tremendous loss of cadres suffered as a result of the baseless and false mass repressions in 1937–1938." We do not yet have any official Soviet statistics on the total losses resulting from the Great Purge, but it has been credibly estimated that around nine million persons were arrested during it.[18] And it must be borne in mind that the great majority of these victims were from the Party and non-Party governing strata of Soviet society, including professional people of all kinds and technicians.

Secondly, a great lesson to be learned from a study of the events of that time is that our theory of totalitarianism has unduly neglected the personal factor. It has not taken account, or sufficient account, of the role of the dictator and his personality in determining the conduct of the regime, the dynamics of totalitarianism itself, in such truly totalitarian situa-

17 *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951), p. 376 n. For an elaborated interpretation of the Stalinist purge in terms of postulated functional needs of the Soviet system, see Zbigniew K. Brzezinski: *The Permanent Purge: Politics in Soviet Totalitarianism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), esp. Chapters 5 and 10.

18 For the computations of the estimate of nine million, see Alexander Weissberg *The Accused* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951), pp. 318–325. Boris Nicolaevsky has estimated that from five to eight million persons were victims of the Great Purge. The number of those who were executed at the time has been estimated by a high Yugoslav Communist source at three million (V. Dedijer: *Tito*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953, p. 106).

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tions as Germany under Hitler and Russia in the time of Stalin. Not the needs of the Soviet system but Stalin's own needs, both political and psychological, underlay the events of 1937–1938 in Russia. Not only was he, as noted earlier, the prime mover and director of those events; they occurred basically because he relentlessly willed them and was skillful enough to make others do his bidding, just as the "final solution" was perpetrated in Nazi Germany in the last analysis because Hitler fanatically desired to destroy European Jewry and succeeded in imposing his will upon the totalitarian machine of the state. Of course, the Great Purge, once it started, acquired a self-propelling momentum of its own as a result, largely, of the N.K.V.D. system of forced denunciation under which each arrested person was coerced not only to admit participating in a non-existent conspiracy but also to name those who had recruited him into the imaginary conspiratorial center and those whom he himself had recruited. This helps to explain the probably unanticipated extent of the holocaust in Soviet society. But the key causal role was Stalin's. And his determination to force through the Great Purge and the trials was dictated by powerful motives that were peculiarly his own and not widely shared in the Soviet ruling elite. A full analysis of them is beyond the scope of this essay, but I will comment on three principal facets of the motivation.

The Political Symbolical Function of the Trials

We are here particularly concerned with the purge trials. But the reasons for staging them must be seen in the context of the motives for the total purge, in which thousands were executed or sent to camps by administrative order for every one who was placed on trial in public. For the purge trials had, in the first place, a political symbolic function, which was to provide a rationale for the purge, to make publicly meaningful the campaign of arrests that was going on night after night. The underlying assumption of the Great Purge was that treason was abroad in the land, especially among Party members, and that it had to be cleaned out and exterminated on the massive scale that this treason itself had assumed. The three great Moscow show trials and a number of lesser local trials held at this time were designed to dramatize this idea, to show the existence, enormity, and scope of the purported treasonable activity, which had—it was thus made to appear—been organized and directed by men at the pinnacle of the Party and state as well as their counterparts at the provincial level. Accordingly, the question of Stalin's motives is first of all the question of what he wanted to achieve by the purge as a whole.

A large part of the answer is that he wanted to achieve an unrestricted personal dictatorship with a totality of power that he did not yet possess in 1934. By the late 1920's he had become the acknowledged supreme leader of the Party and state. In the Bolshevik political tradition, however, this did not make him an absolute autocrat like the Russian Tsars, for no such position had been institutionalized in Lenin's one-party system. He could not dictate his will to the ruling elite at the level of the Politburo and

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Central Committee without fear of being contradicted. He could not count—as Lenin before him could not—on automatic acceptance of his policy designs without critical debate and opposition in the inner councils of the Party. And there are indications, as we have seen, that such debate and occasional opposition continued even in the early 1930's. The prime internal political purpose of the Great Purge from Stalin's point of view was to end all this, to eliminate the Bolshevik habits of criticism and opposition as well as the men who personified these habits, and to create for himself an autocracy as absolute as any that ever existed. To purge those Party members who had opposed him in the past was not enough for this purpose. Given the intricate system of patronage that prevailed at all levels in the Party and state bureaucracy, the purge of a major figure logically entailed the purge of his patronage groups of associates and retainers, many of whom had lesser patronage groups of their own, and so on. Lack of objective incriminating facts about an individual was no obstacle to unmasking him, since he could be accused of *potential* oppositionism. Thus many of the purge victims were staunch Stalinists with no taint of real oppositionism in their records; their tragedies were caused by often quite accidental career associations. The outcome of the whole process was a veritable circulation of the Soviet elite. Total subservience to Stalin was now established as the first requirement for survival and political advancement. Emerging from the events of 1936–1938 as a personal dictator in what was now a truly totalitarian system of power. Stalin had achieved the internal political purpose of the Great Purge.

A Rationale For Terror

But this political purpose was connected with psychological needs. Stalin has been called, and with a good foundation, a technician of power. It would be a mistake, though, to see him as only that. He was not a cold-blooded cynic who viewed his villainy as villainy and accepted it as such. In making himself an absolute autocrat at so sickening a price in blood and misery, he thought he was serving the interests of the Party he was purging and the country he was terrorizing. We have evidence for the view that in engineering the events of 1936–1938 he really believed himself to be cleansing the Soviet land of treason. Some of it comes from Khrushchev, who says in the secret report: "Stalin was a very distrustful man, sickly suspicious; we know this from our work with him. He could look at a man and say: 'Why are your eyes so shifty today' or 'Why are you turning so much today and avoiding to look at me in the eyes?' The sickly suspicion created in him a general distrust even toward eminent party workers whom he had known for years. Everywhere and in everything he saw 'enemies,' 'two-facers' and 'spies.'" This description of a personality of pronounced paranoid tendency is supported by further testimony from a variety of sources, both Soviet and non-Soviet.

By what mechanism of thinking did Stalin apprehend "enemies," "two-facers," and "spies" all around him when, as we know, there was no real anti-Soviet conspiracy afoot? An essen-

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tial part of the answer is that he regarded opposition to or criticism of himself—and there had been a great deal of both in the history of the Party—as evidence of profound malevolence and treasonable tendencies. Khrushchev points to this mechanism when he says in the secret report that the category "enemy of the people" was applied to "those who in any way disagreed with Stalin" as well as to "those who were only suspected of hostile intent" or "had bad reputations" (that is, politically). Stalin's tendency to identify oppositionism with treason was linked with his inability to tolerate the thought that oppositional or simply critical attitudes towards him could have any real basis in imperfections of his mind and character or in flaws in his leadership, and policies. Given this inhibition, which was rooted in his need to see himself as the perfect leader "of genius" (*genial'ny* the term constantly used of him in Russia in his later lifetime), it followed logically that any opposition, whether open or merely a subtle suggestion of a critical attitude, must be a sign of hidden hostile designs and must stem from an enmity all the more deep and dangerous in that it was often concealed behind an appearance ("mask") of loyalty and friendliness. In short, it was evidence of probable participation in a criminal conspiracy or, at the very least, of an intention to participate in one. According to this logic, which is similar to if not actually paranoid logic,[19] the Party and country in the early 1930's, when Stalin began planning the Great Purge, were crawling with traitors.

The purge trials are constructed around this paranoid-like logic. The reader will note that a great deal of the discourse between Vyshinsky and the defendants proceeds on the tacit understanding that an imputation of criminal conspiracy may be made on the basis of oppositional acts or attitudes. This idea defines the rules of the trial game, or "rules of translation" as they have been called.[20] A whole table of equivalences was accepted in which, for example, anti-Stalin = "counter-revolutionary," oppositional activity = "treason," anti-

19 Speaking of paranoid delusions, Dr. Otto Fenichel writes that "the hatred is never projected at random but is felt usually in connection with something that has a basis in reality. Patients with persecutory ideas are extremely sensitive to criticism and use the awareness of actual insignificant criticisms as the reality basis for their delusions. The basis has, of course, to be extremely exaggerated and distorted in order to be made available for this purpose. Just as the 'monsters' in a dream may represent an 'amoeba' from daily life, so the monster of a paranoid delusion may be a misapprehended real microbe" (*The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis*, New York: Norton, 1945, p. 428). Elsewhere we read that the paranoid individual "is constantly looking for hidden meanings in the statements and activities of those about him" (R. M. Dorcus and G. W. Schaffer: *Textbook of Abnormal Psychology*, Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1950, p. 438).

20 N. Leites and E. Bernaut: *Ritual of Liquidation: The Case of the Moscow Trials* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1954), p. 111. These writers express here the view that the defendants "accepted" these rules of translation because (1) they shared a contemptuous belief that the masses can only understand a simple and extreme story, and (2) they had come to feel that the fables they agreed to tell were in some special sense true. I believe, on the contrary, that their acceptance of the rules of translation was strictly a forced acceptance, and that they did not consider the fables true even in some special sense.

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Stalin grouping = "conspiratorial terrorist center," anti-Stalin political orientation = "orientation on terrorism," etc., the general formula being that any opposing or criticizing of Stalin or his policies = "counter-revolutionary terrorism." In the 1937 trial Piatakov alluded to this system of equivalences when, in agreeing that he had given a certain man orders to make connections with German intelligence, he added that he had done this only in a "more algebraical formulation"—by having a talk with the man in an oppositional vein.[21] Similar allusions are made by Bukharin and others in the 1938 trial. The trials are thus in large part intricate exercises in the ferreting out of sinister terroristic *hidden meanings* in activities of the chief defendants which consisted mostly of critical or oppositional talk, especially about Stalin. The great counter-revolutionary conspiracy itself represents, as it were, the highly systematized sum total of all these hidden meanings, treated as true; it is the premise on which all of Stalin's most ominous suspicions about what was going on behind his back would have been well founded.

"Algebra" of Trials Rejects Stalin's Mind

What I am arguing, then, is that the "algebra" of the Moscow trials was a reflection of the general way in which their organizer's mind actually worked. It is all the more understandable according to this view that Stalin, as has been reported, played a leading part in devising the legends for the trials. It need not be supposed that he believed them altogether literally. But they must have appeared to him as being true in principle and false, if at all, only in being embellishments on reality itself—embellishments, moreover, in which he could legitimately take a certain artistic pride. The implication is that the trials served not alone the above-mentioned political symbolic function of rationalizing the Great Purge but, at the same time, the psychological symbolic function of rationalizing Stalin's own paranoid tendency. The world of the Great Purge and the purge trials, peopled by multitudes of masked enemies conspiring to destroy Stalin's regime and Stalin himself, was Stalin's own mental world. Under his guidance the N.K.V.D., assisted by Vyshinsky and others, was confirming the reality of it and making it appear still more concretely and convincingly real by arresting huge numbers of Soviet citizens, compelling them to *confess* that they had been masked enemies, and putting on show trials in which leading former oppositionists and others publicly proclaimed themselves guilty of high treason. Accordingly, we may view the trials as vehicles for the acting out of something similar to a paranoid delusional system complete with central theme (the great conspiracy) and malevolent pseudo-community ("Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites," etc.). In this regard the verbatim report here presented is a document out of the history of human psychopathology.

But there was much political method in this psychopathology. As indi-

21 *The Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Center* (Moscow: People's Commissariat of Justice of the U.S.S.R., 1937), pp. 188–189. Vyshinsky replied at this point: "I know what you mean by algebra, but I must now deal not with algebra but with facts."

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cated earlier, the thesis that the politics of the purge were psychological politics is in no way inconsistent with the view that practical political ends were pursued. Something has been said already about the internal political ends. But an interpretation of the trials must also take account of their external political purpose, their connection with Stalin's foreign policy.

4

A widely shared opinion sees the Great Purge as an attempt to prepare the Party and the country for the coming test of total war by consolidating the home front in advance. The trials themselves, with their charges that the accused were plotting to act as a fifth column in a war with the fascist powers, invited such an interpretation. Probably not many informed people followed the former U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Joseph Davies, in taking the position (in his wartime book *Mission to Moscow*) that the treason charges had been factually true. But Western opinion has tended to accept the general idea that Stalin's major concern was to assure a solid internal situation in the face of the threat of German invasion. According to a sophisticated version of it that has been expounded by Isaac Deutscher in his influential biography of Stalin, the point of the purge trials was to forestall any disruption of the future war effort, and Stalin's leadership of it, by eliminating those leaders with a record of political dissent who might be inclined to unseat him in a crisis. According to Deutscher, "His reasoning probably developed along the following lines: they may want to overthrow me in a crisis—I shall charge them with having already made the attempt. They certainly believe themselves to be better fitted for the conduct of war, which is absurd. A change of government may weaken Russia's fighting capacity; and if they succeed, they may be compelled to sign a truce with Hitler, and perhaps even agree to a cession of territory as we once did at Brest-Litovsk. I shall accuse them of having entered already into a treacherous alliance with Germany (and Japan) and ceded Soviet territory to those states."[22]

During and after World War II Stalin probably liked to view the events of 1936–1938 in retrospect as part of his preparation of Russia for the coming great conflict with Hitler. But the idea that this was his motive at the time he planned and directed those events appears unsound. First, the Great Purge, as has been remarked above, was in effect a great wrecking operation in Soviet society. Stalin himself must have been aware that the onslaught upon the Soviet managerial elite was not calculated to make the Soviet system and economy better able to withstand the test of war. He must have realized too that the preparedness and morale of the army would scarcely be furthered by the purging of 35,000 officers (the estimated number of those affected) along with the high command headed by the immensely able Tukhachevsky. This military purge itself accounts in considerable measure for the Red Army's poor performance during most of the Finnish

22 *Stalin: A Political Biography*, pp. 377–378.

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war and its staggering setbacks in 1941–1942; and those effects were easily predictable. Next, Stalin, for all his pathological suspiciousness, was shrewd and discerning enough to realize that in a national crisis brought on by a Nazi invasion of Russia, even his worst old Party enemies would rally instantly and unreservedly around the war effort and his personal leadership of it. For these old Bolshevik leaders, and the Tukhachevsky group, were anti-fascist Communists. Finally, the view that the Great Purge and the trials were preparation for a coming conflict with Hitler collides with evidence that Stalin at this time was *not in fact preparing for conflict with Hitler but for collaboration with him.* He was preparing the diplomacy of the Soviet-Nazi pact that was finally concluded, on Stalin's initiative, in August 1939. And insofar as the politics of the purge and the trials were externally oriented, they were, as I shall now try to show, a preparation for the active alliance of the two dictators which was thereby inaugurated.

The Stalin-Hitler Pact

It is a mistake to look upon the diplomacy of the pact with Hitler as the only possible course the Soviet government could have followed at the end of the 1930's. Nor was it a course that the Bolshevik leaders as a group could find politically compelling and psychologically acceptable, as Stalin did. For though there were strong resemblances between communism and fascism as institutional structures, the revolutionary intellectuals of the Bolshevik Old Guard, most of them Russian or Jewish by origin, felt that their aims and values if not their institutions were fundamentally different from those of the German Nazis. The one among them who voiced this feeling most effectively, the intellectual leader of Bolshevik anti-fascism, was Bukharin. His speech at the Seventeenth Party Congress early in 1934 was notable not only for his tribute to Stalin's policy and leadership but also for the impassioned warning and outcry against Hitlerism with which he concluded. Quoting the Nazi poet who had said, "Every time I hear the word 'culture' I reach for my Browning," he eloquently portrayed Hitlerism's cult of blood and violence, and foresaw for the Soviet Union an unavoidable collision with this irrational force: "This is what stands before us, and these are the ones whom we shall have to face, comrades, in all those stupendous historical battles that history as laid on our shoulders."[23] This part of the speech reportedly made a strong impression upon the assembly. After the Congress Bukharin became not only editor of *Izvestia* but also a member of the commission set up in February 1935 to draft a new Soviet constitution, which was to show by its humanistic and democratic features the chasm that separated the Soviet order from fascism. There is reason to believe, moreover, that he was one of the leading drafters of this document.

Stalin's speech at the Seventeenth Congress reflected a very different line toward Hitler's Germany. He cautioned the Germans against thinking that the U.S.S.R. was now orienting itself toward France and Poland be-

23 *XVII S'ezd vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (b). Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1934), pp. 128–129.

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cause fascism had come to power in Germany. "Of course, we are far from enthusiastic about the fascist regime in Germany," he said. "But fascism is beside the point, if only because fascism in Italy, for example, has not kept the U.S.S.R. from establishing the best of relations with that country." Stalin went on to indicate clearly that a *rapprochement* with Berlin was not to be excluded, if Soviet interests would be served thereby and if, within Hitler's government, a pro-Soviet tendency should prevail over an anti-Soviet one.[24] If an anti-Hitler diplomacy was implicit in Bukharin's speech, the diplomacy of the 1939 pact was prefigured in Stalin's; and the divergence between them reflected a real division of tendencies in the Soviet leadership that was ended only by the Great Purge. According to Krivitsky, Stalin's inclination to make a deal with Hitler was strengthened by the latter's successful blood purge of Captain Roehm and his group on the night of June 30, 1934, an event that Stalin construed as evidence of the consolidation of Hitler's regime. But for some time Hitler showed no receptiveness to feelers from the East. In these circumstances Stalin was content to go along with the politics of the anti-fascist Popular Front and the diplomacy of collective security which Foreign Commissar Litvinov pursued vigorously in the middle 1930's.[25] If in the eyes of the anti-fascist Communists the Litvinov foreign-policy line was a correct political orientation, from Stalin's point of view it had at least the virtue of placing pressure on a reluctant Hitler to respond to his advances.

Hitler's unopposed occupation of the Rhineland in March 1936 hardened Stalin's resolve to make a deal with Germany if possible, and this in turn spurred his efforts to proceed with the full-scale internal purge towards which he had long been moving for other reasons. It is notable in this connection that Party members (both Soviet and foreign) who could be suspected of being genuinely anti-fascist Communists were particularly hard hit *as a class* by the mass repressions of 1936–1938.[26] It was not simply that these people, including the great majority of Old Bolshevik leaders, would have found it very hard to stomach a treaty with the Nazis. To understand Stalin's special motive for getting rid of them, we must remember that he visualized the coming pact with Hitler as more than merely a way of securing temporary safety from invasion and buying time for further defense preparation. What he contemplated, as his alliance with Hitler in 1939–1941 showed in retrospect, was a kind of Moscow-Berlin axis, an active collaboration of the two dictatorships for territorial expansion, the division of spheres of influence in Eastern Eu-

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

25 *In Stalin's Secret Service*, pp. 1–4. For a detailed and convincing argument that the Soviet leadership until the Great Purge was divided over the main lines of its foreign policy, with Stalin and Bukharin as exponents of the two main opposing positions, see Robert M. Slusser: "The Role of the Foreign Ministry," in Ivo J. Lederer, (ed): *Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

26 "We even met prisoners who had been prophesying the Hitler pact since 1938, simply on the basis of categories that had been arrested" (Beck and Godin: *op. cit.*, p. 234).

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rope, the Balkans, and even the Middle East. Now the Old Bolsheviks and other Party members who shared their outlook were revolutionaries, not old-fashioned Russian imperialists. They could have gone along, if reluctantly, with a simple non-aggression arrangement with Berlin. But a policy of outright imperialistic aggression in collaboration with Nazi Germany would have been extremely repugnant to very many of them, as Stalin knew. Nor could the Polish Communist Party (which was simply dissolved in the Great Purge) be expected to acquiesce supinely in a new partition of Poland between Russia and Germany. Consequently, to get a fully free hand for the diplomacy of the Soviet-Nazi alliance, Stalin needed to eliminate or expel thousands of foreign as well as Soviet Communists and to achieve in external as well as internal policy the absolute autocracy that, as we have seen, only the Great Purge brought him.

Bukharin's Last Article— "Thoughts Aloud"

That this was his plan must have become clear to Bukharin upon his ill-fated return to Moscow from Paris in early April 1936, and in his final months of circumscribed freedom he did what he could to resist. His last signed editorial article appeared in *Izvestia* on July 6, 1936, under the title "Routes of History" and with a subtitle ("Thoughts Aloud") that alerted the knowing reader, by its very unusualness in the Soviet press, to expect something significant. Starting with lavish praise of the "Stalin Constitution" that had by then been drafted and submitted for nation-wide public discussion, Bukharin expounded the theme that "real history" had not proceeded in our time along the routes previously predicted. Certain "false prophets" (by subtle allusion Stalin is indicated to have been foremost among them) had failed, for example, to foresee that fascism would emerge as the greatest international problem. Now it is a "paradox of history," the article goes on, that though the masses are regarded by the fascist ideologues as *Untermenschen,* the rulers in order to retain control must deceive the people by creating an illusion of being with and for the masses. In actuality, whereas socialism raises the mass, enriches the content of personality, and elevates the intellectual functions, fascism "creates a depersonalized mass, with blind discipline, with a cult of Jesuitical obedience, with suppression of the intellectual functions." Thus deception is the essence of fascism: "An intricate network of decorative deceit (in words and deeds) is the extraordinarily essential characteristic of fascist regimes of all kinds and complexions." And while the deceitful fascist elite allows that its people own the means of production only "spiritually," for its own part it means to own "cannon," "airplanes," and "lands in the east of Europe" not in a "spiritual" sense only, but materially. But this deception must sooner or later come to light: "Its perpetrators have it in mind to gain for themselves an historical respite by sending everything into the yawning abyss of war. However, this is a game of winner take all in which they will lose everything."

This most audacious and desperate of Bukharin's essays in anti-Stalin

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Aesopian polemics[27] may be translated as follows: Do not take the Stalin Constitution and its democratic phraseology seriously. It is only a decorative façade of political deceit behind which Stalin is moving to create, by means of a huge blood purge, a new Soviet regime of fascist complexion which will be a denial of the Marxist ideals of the Russian Revolution. It will be a totally despotic regime based on police terror and suppression of the Party leadership and the intelligentsia ("intellectual functions"). Stalin is seeking by these means to pave the way for an alliance with the German fascists which will precipitate a second world war in which he expects to remain at least temporarily uninvolved while we build cannon and airplanes and assimilate Eastern European territories that we will occupy under the deal. But the whole plan will lead only to disaster. Why Bukharin thought Stalin's plan would lead to disaster was explained shortly after in another editorial, which was unsigned but bore indications (for example, the characteristic touch of quoting from Shelley's "Masque of Anarchy") of Bukharin's personal authorhsip. "It would be unforgivable blindness," it said, "not to see that it is the land of Soviets that attracts the most savage hatred of the unbridled adventurists." It was folly, in other words, to suppose that Hitler could be deflected for long from attacking the U.S.S.R. The editorial also made an emotional appeal to the British ruling circles to take a firm stand against the Nazis. Picturing Lords Lothian, Londonberry, and others as "fawning on Hitler," it recalled the war dead of 1914–1918 and asked: "How are the sons of England sleeping in Flanders fields?" This editorial, entitled "War and Peace," appeared in *Izvestia* on August 1. Later that month the trial of the sixteen began, and with it the public denunciations of Bukharin.[28]

For Stalin the purge trials had a foreign policy motive beyond those just discussed. He wanted to use them as a means of communicating to Hitler the seriousness of his interest in a collaborative arrangement, and simultaneously as a way of softening the shock that a Stalin-Hitler pact would inevitably cause in Russia and especially in the world Communist movement. These motives may seem implausible in view of the fact that negotiating a deal with

27 The Aesopian message was very probably intended for the Western world as well as for Soviet and foreign communist circles. In this connection we have Bukharin's own word for it that he consciously endeavored to communicate messages to the outside world by the use of veiled language in press articles. In one of his meetings with Boris Nicolaevsky in Paris in early 1936, Bukharin said that his unsigned editorial articles in *Izvestia* written after the murder of Kirov had contained various passages in which he had tried to reveal by indirection the substance of issues then under debate behind the scenes in higher Party circles. I am indebted to Mr. Nicolaevsky for his permission to reveal this here.

28 To say that the Western world failed to decipher Bukharin's messages and grasp the meaning of developments afoot in Russia at that time would be putting it kindly. Hugo Dewar describes, for example, as follows the reaction of *The Times* of London in 1936 and 1937: "The trials, it thought, reflected the triumph of Stalin's 'nationalist' policy over that of the revolutionary diehards. The conservative forces, with the overwhelming support of the nation, had now demonstrably gained the day" ("How They Saw the Moscow Trials," *Survey*, April 1962, p. 94).

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the Nazis was presented particularly in the 1937 and 1938 trials, as one of the most heinous acts of treason on the part of the accused. Did this not impart a strongly anti-fascist coloring to these trials? Superficially it did, but let us take a closer look. The men in Berlin well knew that the charges of treasonable dealings with Nazi Germany were baseless. But if negotiating with the Nazis was not their real crime, was it, in Stalin's eyes, a crime at all? If the German Embassy in Moscow followed the 1938 trial closely, it must have noted that the defendant Bessonov, who had been counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin at the start of the Nazi era, pleaded guilty in the very first session to receiving and acting on orders from Deputy Foreign Commissar Krestinsky and also from Trotsky to obstruct a "normalization of relations between the Soviet Union and Germany." This charge, repeated later in the trial, carried the significant implication that the anti-Stalin Communist opposition had been standing in the way of developing fruitful diplomatic relations between the Soviet and Nazi governments. Moreover, the Germans could not but know that many of the principal trial defendants, above all Bukharin, had been foremost among the anti-fascist Communists, and that a sizable proportion were Jews. Putting all this together, the fascist leaders could very reasonably infer from the trials that Stalin was seriously getting ready to do business with them. Evidence that the trials were so interpreted is to be found in a foreign-affairs commentary printed in the Italian fascist paper *Popolo d'Italia* on March 5, 1938. Reacting to the Bukharin trial then taking place in Moscow, the commentary asked whether "in view of the catastrophe of Lenin's system, Stalin could secretly have become a fascist." In any event, it went on: "Stalin is doing a notable service to fascism by mowing down in large armfuls his enemies who have been reduced to impotence." The commentator was Benito Mussolini.

Preparing for the Shock Of the Hitler Alliance

The trials had, finally, the function of softening in advance the shock that the treaty of alliance with Hitler would administer to Soviet and world Communist opinion. This function was served, in particular, by the charges against the Trotskyite and Right Oppositions of negotiating a deal with the Nazis. In developing these charges in the trials, much was made of the theme that such prominent anti-Stalinist Communists as Trotsky and Bukharin were not only prepared to have dealings with the Nazis but were themselves pro-fascist. Thus the defendant Ivanov pictures himself and Bukharin as having, politically speaking, "arrived directly at fascism," and Vyshinsky, in the summing-up speech, says of Bukharin: "Like a true watchdog of fascism, he barked joyfully expressing his admiration for German fascism." This smearing of the accused as both fascist in mentality and bent on collaborating with the Nazis was preparation for *Stalin's* collaboration with them—in the sense that it undermined the whole idea that communism stood for anti-fascism, and spiked in advance the thought (which certainly would have occurred to many in Russia and the Communist movement) that the Old Bolsheviks, unlike Stalin, would

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have avoided the Soviet-Nazi pact *on anti-fascist principle*. In short, it paradoxically tended, if not to establish in advance the political respectability of Stalin's plan for the pact with Hitler, at least to diminish its disreputability. In these terms the trials were saying: If the anti-Stalin Communists were ready and willing to bargain with the Nazis for *anti*-Soviet purposes of defeating and dismembering the U.S.S.R., what is so bad about striking a bargain with Berlin that will *serve* Soviet interests by expanding our territorial possessions and keeping us out of war while the Germans and the West fight it out? To a considerable extent the trials fulfilled this devious design. For while the pact of August 1939 came as a shock to the international Communist movement, which, suffered significant defections as a result of the disgust many felt at this turn of events, the shock would have been all the greater and more damaging to the movement and to Stalin had he not, by means of the purge trials, compromised the notion that no Communists, and no Old Bolsheviks in particular, would have friendly dealings with the Nazis.

5

The conduct of Bukharin at his trial has long fascinated the Western mind. Rubashov, the Old Bolshevik hero of Arthur Koestler's well-known novel about the purge trials, *Darkness at Noon,* appears to have been drawn, at least in part, upon the model of Bukharin. In 1947 the French philosopher M. Merleau-Ponty published a small book, *Humanisme et Terreur,* which was devoted largely to a critique of what the author called Koestler's "Rubashov-Bukharin" and to an interpretation along different lines of Bukharin's decision to confess. Others too have contributed to this literature, and no examination of the great purge trial would be complete without an effort to solve the problem of Bukharin's motivation. What I should like to do here is to outline some of the evidence for an interpretation of it that relies in part on what is called "Kremlinology," that is, the analysis of Soviet political processes as reflected in esoteric communication or veiled controversy in published Soviet materials. For it seems to me that in one of its many aspects the verbatim report is a kind of laboratory for the study of Soviet politics by the Kremlinological method.

We must recognize, to begin with, that Bukharin agreed to participate in the trial only under some kind of duress. There were others, such as Yenukidze and Karakhan, who refused to do this and went to their death without public trial. Bukharin himself hints at his resistance. He was under arrest for well over a year before the trial, and says in his final statement: "For three months I refused to say anything." To have resisted pressure for so long was in itself a remarkable feat. For as Bukharin put it in an Aesopian passage of his final statement, speaking of his confession: "But here we also have the internal demolition of the forces of counter-revolution. And one must be a Trotsky not to lay down one's arms." This was a way of saying: Stalin and his men have ways of demolish-

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ing a person's resistance by playing upon his innermost feelings, ways that hardly anyone can resist unless he is a Trotsky, that is, unless he is living in Mexico or somewhere else outside the reach of the N.K.V.D. What were the feelings in question? We have no evidence that physical torture was used in Bukharin's case, or that a deal was struck to spare his life if he cooperated, for he made it rather clear in the trial that he expected no mercy for himself. The lives of others, however, do appear to have been at stake. What was reportedly used as the chief means of coercing Bukharin into agreement to go on trial was the threat to retaliate against his young wife and little boy if he should refuse.[29] This was an all but irresistible form of pressure to which Stalin had also resorted in other cases, notably Kamenev's.

Rendering a Last Service to the Party

It is very likely, however, that in the case of Bukharin, as in some others involving former leaders of the Party, Stalin and his men also made use of certain blandishments, including the invitation to play the trial role as a "last service" to the Party and the Revolutionary cause. As a person whose whole life had been bound up with the Party and the Revolution, Bukharin could hardly have been insensitive to such an approach. Perhaps on this account the theory of the "last service" figures prominently in the Western literature about Bukharin on trial. In *Darkness at Noon*, for example, the Stalinist investigator Gletkin appeals to Rubashov-Bukharin to render a final service to the Party by going on trial and thereby helping to consolidate the country behind the Stalin regime in the face of an imminent danger of war, and Rubashov performs this service, although with deepening doubt of the moral validity of the Revolutionary cause to which he had devoted his life and was now sacrificing it. Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, in effect makes out Bukharin to be a man who dialectically arrived on his own at Gletkin's kind of reasoning. On this view Bukharin, though not guilty of the counter-revolutionary crimes with which he was charged, nevertheless sees in his dialectician's mind that he *was* guilty, since oppositionism in any form was tantamount to treason under the precarious conditions of existence of the Soviet state in the 1930's. Thus Merleau-Ponty ascribes to Bukharin an acceptance in principle of that peculiar Stalinist algebraic formula according to which any opposing of Stalin = "counter-revolutionary terrorism."

If we suppose (as seems reasonable) that Bukharin's consent to take part in the trial represented in some sense a deliberate political choice as well as a bowing to coercion, then the idea that he wanted to render a last service to his cause is highly plausible. But the versions of the theory just mentioned, and others similar to them, encounter certain objections. First, we have rea-

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29 Orlov: *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes*, pp. 280–281. I am again indebted to Mr. Nicolaevsky for pointing out to me in this connection that the three principal defendants in the 1938 trial, Bukharin, Rykov, and Krestinsky, all had children with whom they were very close, whereas Yenukidze and Karakhan, both of whom would have been in Stalin's eyes logical candidates for major roles as defendants in this trial, did not. These two men were executed in 1937 without public trial.

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son to doubt that the Moscow trials were in fact a means of preparing the country to withstand the test of war. Bukharin, moreover, certainly saw them as a means of preparing for the Soviet-Nazi alliance, and it is unimaginable that he could have brought himself to a decision to take part in the show trial in order to help Stalin pave the way for his pact with Hitler. Furthermore, the theory of the last service in its conventional forms would lead us to expect Bukharin to play his part in the show trial in active cooperation with the prosecutor or at any rate in a spirit of resignation. But this he did not do. He did make a point of admitting and even underlining the enormity of his guilt; and this is a salient fact that our interpretation must account for. But at the same time we have a mass of textual evidence and eyewitness testimony to the effect that there was a play within the play of the show trial, and that the inner play was a real contest between Bukharin and Vyshinsky.

Significant Departures From Prepared Script

During the trial Bukharin, even though he had to speak in broad conformity with a script prepared in advance to suit his accusers, fought constantly. Thus he intervened on occasion to impugn by a single question the credibility of a defendant who had testified against him (see, for example, his question to Ivanov in the morning session of March 3), and at one point he directly described two of the defendants, Ivanov and Sharangovich, as police agents ("agents provocateurs"). He pleaded guilty to "the sum total of crimes committed by this counter-revolutionary organization," but thereupon suggested that not only did he not take part in but he even lacked knowledge of "any particular act" involved. He denied, as we have seen, that the defendants constituted a conspiratorial group in the sense of the trial indictment. He disclaimed all knowledge of his alleged connections with the German fascists, denied ever having spoken of opening the front in time of war, rejected the charge of plotting the assassination of Lenin, Stalin, and Sverdlov in 1918, failed to recall ever having directed anyone to engage in wrecking activities, categorically denied all connection with foreign intelligence services as well as any complicity in the assassination of Kirov, Gorky, and his son, and so on. During Vyshinsky's summing-up speech, which preceded his own, he was observed furiously taking notes. His own final statement was so little pleasing to Stalin that it was not, like the preceding parts of the verbatim record, printed in full in the next day's *Pravda* but only briefly summarized. And foreign observers present at the trial were profoundly impressed by his fighting demeanor. According to the *New York Times* correspondent, "Mr. Bukharin alone, who all too obviously in his last words fully expected to die, was manly, proud and almost defiant. He is the first of the fifty-four men who have faced the court in the last three public treason trials who has not abased himself in the last hours of the trial."[30] Fitzroy MacLean, who attended the trial as an official representative of the British Embassy in Moscow and later wrote a vivid account of it, pictures Bukharin, in giving his final

30 *The New York Times*, March 13, 1938.

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statement, as standing there "frail and defiant," admitting in principle the justice of the case against him and then proceeding "to tear it to bits, while Vyshinsky, powerless to intervene, sat uneasily in his place, looking embarrassed and yawning ostentatiously."[31]

What Was Bukharin Trying to Achieve?

That Bukharin was putting up a fight is clear enough, but what was he fighting for? It is evident that he was not fighting in any real sense to defend himself or to save his life, since any small chance of saving his life would only have been erased by the very fact that he put up this fight. I suggest, therefore, that his aim in the contest was offensive rather than defensive. Not to defend himself but to convict his accuser was the purpose. That he would have *wanted* to do this, if he could, is quite clear from evidence already cited in these pages. He had long before begun to view Stalin as a coarse bungling political leader who was ideologically illiterate on crucial points and was leading Lenin's party and the Bolshevik Revolution to ruination out of a monstrous appetite for personal power. Before his arrest he had even pictured Stalin as engaged in transforming Soviet communism into a Soviet form of fascism, and he had attempted to warn the Party and the world that Stalin was scheming to make common cause with Hitler in a great and ill-starred political gamble that would bring on World War II and destroy the Soviet Union. By no stretch of political imagination could he now identify Stalin's regime with historic Bolshevism or see Stalin himself as other than anti-Bolshevik. Is it not clear, then, that for Bukharin a last service to the Party and the Revolution could consist only of a last denunciation of Stalin for betraying and ruining both? That such an idea would occur to him was all the more likely, in view of a certain tradition in the Russian revolutionary movement before 1917—the tradition of turning trials into anti-trials. The crux of this maneuver was that a revolutionist on trial for attempting to overthrow the existing order would seek to turn the tables upon his accusers and place them on trial before the court of public opinion and history. He would do this by foregoing a speech of defense and delivering instead a revolutionary oration, a denunciation of his accusers, their motives, their policies, and their social order.

Now there was no possibility for Bukharin to deliver such an oration in one of Stalin's show trials. Nor would the course followed by Krestinsky meet the needs of the anti-trial strategy. In the initial session Krestinsky publicly retracted his pre-trial confession, intimating that he had confessed under duress. But this gesture availed him nothing, for a little later on in the trial, after unknown events transpired behind the scenes, he retracted his retraction and from then on played his part unresisting. Bukharin must have been fully aware of the futility of such a course. Nevertheless, he appears to have found and put into practice a method of achieving his purpose. It required, first of all, simply a decision to go on trial—

31 *Escape to Adventure* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1950), p. 74.

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something that he in any event was being coerced to do. Secondly, it required the pursuit of certain tactics during the trial which I shall comment upon presently. Stalin was insisting that he appear as chief defendant in the trial. Well and good. He would do so, and try to save his family by complying with that basic and irreducible demand. But he would do so in his own way, speaking his lines according to the Stalin-Vyshinsky script but at the same time saying between these lines whatever he could say to make *his* point. Stalin, knowing Bukharin well, undoubtedly realized that he would do this. But he evidently thought it a tolerable price to pay for the great success of persuading Bukharin to go on trial and confess himself guilty of counter-revolutionary conspiracy. And he probably assumed that Vyshinsky and Ulrich, with the help of many of the trial defendants who would in effect be prosecution witnesses in the guise of defendants, would together manage to hold Bukharin in check.

Two Trials In One . . .

Bukharin thus has a twofold objective in the trial—to comply with Stalin by confessing and at the same time to turn the tables on him. He wants to make it two trials in one. He himself tells us this in a brilliant display of Aesopian language in his final statement. Taking up the theme of the puzzlement that Western European and American intellectuals were showing over the Moscow trials and particularly over the confessions, Bukharin stresses that he has retained his "clarity of mind" and he dismisses fanciful hypotheses that would explain the confessions as based on hypnotism or a mysterious "Slavic soul" or a Dostoyevskyan psychology of self-abasement, etc. He says further that "the first thing to be understood" is that he and any others like him ("the enemy") have "a divided, a dual mind." What he meant by this is indicated by further statements a little later on. [32] The trial, he says, has an aspect of confession, but this is not the crux of it: "The confession of the accused is not essential. The confession of the accused is a medieval principle of jurisprudence." Here Bukharin is saying between the lines that in one of its aspects this trial is a sort of medieval witchcraft trial, and that we should not take the confession *per se* seriously, since in such a trial the witch, as a matter of course, has to

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32 An important rule to bear in mind in translating Bukharin's Aesopian language in the trial is that a certain spacing is necessarily involved. He cannot, without being too obvious, present a whole sequence of his own points in any one passage, but must confine himself to saying one thing. So we must look for the sequence of his argument in a series of separate passages each of which contains some one component of it. A telltale sign of the presence of an Aesopian point in a given passage is a certain suggestion of incoherence or lack of full coherence at this place. A further presupposition of his mode of communicating is that symbols have multiple meanings. In one of its meanings a given symbol may belong to the logic of the show trial; in another, to that of the anti-trial. Thus "Trotsky" may, as in an instance mentioned above, mean "counter-revolutionary" in terms of the show trial and "person living abroad" in terms of the anti-trial. Bukharin refers in one place to "my terminology" in order to convey that he is using words in special ways of his own.

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confess. And the other aspect? Bukharin communicates this point by way of observing that Lion Feuchtwanger's *Moscow 1937,* a little piece of pro-Stalinist apologetics for the trials that had been shown him in prison, did not get to the core of the matter, "when, as a matter of fact, everything is clear. *World history is a world court of judgement"* (my italics). The crucial message is contained in Hegel's dictum on world history as the world's court of justice. In its second aspect, Bukharin was saying, this trial is taking place before the bar of history.

If in the one aspect it was a trial of Bukharin, in the other it was obviously, in Bukharin's eyes, a trial of Stalin. On the basis of his pre-trial political past we can see that the crime for which he would have wanted, if possible, to condemn Stalin before the court of history was that of desecrating the memory of Lenin, betraying what the Revolution stood for, and crushing the Party. Since it would be out of the question to say such things openly in the courtroom, they would have to be conveyed by indirection. Now the essence of convicting someone of a crime is to demonstrate that he has committed it. In the present instance the task would be to demonstrate by indirection that Stalin was committing what in Bukharin's eyes was the supreme political crime—destroying Bolshevism. How could he accomplish this? One way, and under the circumstances the only way, was simply to go on public trial and thereby permit Stalin, his accuser, to convict himself symbolically of destroying Bolshevism by committing the judicial murder of *him.* What enabled Bukharin to accomplish this purpose by this means was his own stature in the Russian Communist movement. He himself was a symbol. If any surviving Old Bolshevik had special claim to represent the original Bolshevik heritage and the link with Lenin, who was the founder and moving spirit of Bolshevism, it was Bukharin. In the "Testament" Lenin himself had said of him: "Bukharin is not only the most valuable and biggest theoretician of the Party, but also may legitimately be considered the favorite of the whole Party." More than Trotsky, who had always been something of an independent quantity, more than Zinoviev and Kamenev, and unquestionably more than Stalin, who claimed the title, Bukharin had a basis to be considered "Lenin today." And though he had been tested by Stalin in the post-Lenin struggles in the Party, his prestige in the eyes of a generation of Party members was very great. Indeed, it was over the "Bukharin question," as we noted earlier, that Stalin appears to have encountered finally a real if belated attempt in the Party leadership to oppose his plans for the Great Purge.

Not Self-Defense But an Anti-Trial

Bukharin was thus in a position to dramatize by his own self-immolation in the show trial what Stalin was doing to Bolshevism. By undergoing the ordeal of defamation to which Stalin and Vyshinsky systematically subjected him all through the trial, by permitting and indeed inviting Vyshinsky to cover him with a torrent of vituperative abuse as "the acme of monstrous hypocrisy, perfidy, jesuitry and inhuman villainy," Bukharin was able not

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only to convict Stalin of putting Bolshevism on trial but to catch him, as it were, red-handed in the act and show him up before the world in the process. Unquestionably it cost him great agony to go through the experience of having his whole revolutionary past besmirched and being accused of what to him would be quite inconceivable acts such as conspiring to kill Lenin or to destroy the Soviet order. But he evidently decided upon it, in part, because it would be a meaningful political act in terms of all that he had set store by in his previous political life. And this is what I believe he was trying to communicate when he said in his final statement that in the face of "the absolutely black vacuity" confronting him, he wanted to die for something. In the next breath he said it would be something that would cost him the sacrifice of his revolutionary reputation and pride: "And at such moments, Citizens, Judges, everything personal, all the personal incrustation, all the rancour, pride, and a number of other things, fall away, disappear."

But the anti-trial was much more than a passive act of self-sacrifice designed to dramatize by Bukharin's own fate that Stalin was condemning Bolshevism. There was an active effort on Bukharin's part to transform the trial into an anti-trial. The fight that he put up against Vyshinsky was entirely dedicated to this purpose, and his tactics all through the trial were precisely calculated to fit the needs of the anti-trial strategy. First of all, as mentioned earlier, he made a special effort to underline his own great guilt. Then he accepted full responsibility for the mass of counter-revolutionary acts with which the "Bloc" was charged, although in doing so he insisted that this was *political* responsibility, that as a leader of the alleged conspiracy he was guilty for whatever acts were committed, either by himself or by others in carrying it out. Still more to the point, he repeated several times in the trial that he wished not to defend but to accuse himself. "I did not want to minimize my guilt, I wanted to aggravate it," he said in one place. "This is not my defense, it is my self-accusation," he said elsewhere. "I have not said a single word in my defense." All this was to say: My tactics in the anti-trial are tactics of self-accusation. By emphasizing in this manner how terribly guilty I, an Old Bolshevik leader, am in Stalin's eyes, I am showing implicitly how guilty *he* is of murderous attitudes and acts against the people who embody historic Bolshevism. Hence my tactics of self-accusation are my way of placing my accuser on trial for his crimes against our party.

This view that Bukharin was not trying to defend himself may seem to be contradicted by what was said earlier here about his denial of guilt under the specific criminal charges. But only in a surface sense was this a defensive move. Bukharin rejected the criminal charges not with a view to pleading innocent in the trial but rather with a view to making more clear where his real guilt lay—in the political field. For this purpose, of course, it was necessary to indicate that he was *not* guilty of certain things. Thus the denial of the criminal charges was an organic part of the whole strategy of exposing and convicting Stalin through his own self-accusation.

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Only if the public saw the accused Bukharin as a political man would it see that the accuser Stalin was destroying a political tendency, condemning Old Bolsheviks for their Bolshevism. Only in this event would it be clear that when, as Bukharin put it, "out of certain deviations monstrous conclusions are formed by the logic of the struggle," these monstrous conclusions and the paranoid-like logic that produced them were Stalin's.

So it was vital to Bukharin's whole case in the anti-trial to show that he had been a Bolshevik oppositionist in relation to Stalin and not, as Vyshinsky was trying very hard to show, a criminal element masquerading for long years as a Bolshevik revolutionary. The duel that rages between the two all through the great purge trial is thus one in which Vyshinsky argues that all Bukharin's purported political acts were really crimes and Bukharin maintains that all his alleged crimes were really political acts. If Bukharin came off remarkably well in this encounter, despite all the disadvantages of his situation compared with Vyshinsky's, one reason lay in the fact that his contention was true.

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LETTERS continued from page 252

been the principal Comintern agent since 1933, though he was preceded in Spain by Heinz Neumann. Madariaga also writes that in April 1936, that is several months before M. Rosenberg was accredited in Madrid, ". . . a party of over a hundred Spaniards and pseudo-Spaniards who had been living in Moscow passed through Paris and were sent on to Spain with every possible care and attention of the Spanish Embassy." ("Spain").

The allegation that Popular Front tactics were not applied before the resolution of the VII Comintern Congress is also inexact. The resolution did not precede but followed a major change in Moscow's policy. Hugh Thomas writes:

> From 1934 onward the policy of the Comintern was to establish a "Popular Front" or alliance with all left-wing parties, working class and "bourgeoisie" included . . .
> [*The Spanish Civil War*]

Franz Borkenau writes:

> In the history of the Comintern 1934 represents an entirely new phase . . . It started with the dropping of violent attacks against democratic parties; continued in attempts to form close alliances with them, alliances no longer limited to the Socialists, but extended to "bourgeois" democrats . . .
> [*World Communism*]

David T. Tattell writes:

> The actual detailed program of the Communist International following this new tack in Soviet foreign policy was not set down until the VII Congress of the Comintern in July and August 1935, though it had already come into operation before that time.
>
> [*Communism and the Spanish Civil War*]

Mr. Greenbaum's preference for formal Soviet steps and Comintern resolutions reveals a somewhat naive view of communist methods.

JAN LIBRACH

Editors:

It is difficult to reconcile Peter Greenebaum's plea for serious debate on Russian affairs with his freewheeling criticism of Jan Librach's *The Rise of the Soviet Empire* in the Winter 1965 DISSENT. Phrases like "utterly worthless, confused, ranting anti-Bolshevism" are hardly contributions to seriousness of discussion, in addition to being quite unfair to Librach's well-documented analysis of Soviet conduct.

Greenebaum certainly exceeds his prerogative as a reviewer in engaging in a vendetta against the current Praeger list while identifying only one book. In any case, what is the relevance of Praeger's list to the book at hand?

It also appears to be an extraordinary foreshortening of history to declare a moratorium so quickly on critical evaluation of the Soviet-Nazi partition of Poland in 1939 and the Soviet takeover of East Europe between 1944 and 1948. These events are still part of contemporary history, and they do constitute a major segment of Soviet empire-building. If these actions are already to be "allowed to the Soviet Union," does Nazi Germany get a green light for conducting what, in Hitler's terms, were simply traditional diplomatic maneuvers?

Finally, why the snide reference to Librach as "allegedly a Polish diplomat"? Is a former Polish diplomat enjoined from expressing moral indignation when he writes about the Soviet Union? Is Greenebaum suggesting (in the pages of DISSENT!) that value judgments are impermissible henceforth in discussing the Soviet Union? And are we to take his review as an example of severe historical objectivity?

HERMAN SINGER

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No. 54 January, 1965

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BUKHARIN: *It must be said for the sake of historical exactitude . . .*

VYSHINSKY: *Don't trouble to speak for history, accused Bukharin. History will itself record what will be interesting for history.*

—From the Trial

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